

Methodological Challenges

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in Childhood and Family Research

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Methodological Challenges in Childhood and Family Research

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Foreword

This Book of Proceedings on ‘Methodological Challenges in Childhood and Family Research’ contains articles based on presentations delivered at the International Conference on Childhood and Family Research on 24-25 October 2007, which was hosted by the Childhood and Family Research Unit at the University of Tampere, Finland (www.uta.fi/laitokset/sospol/perla/index.htm). In contrast to the focus of the former two conferences in 2003 and in 2005 on current thematic issues in the field, the 2007 conference debated and discussed the methodological challenges facing researchers today. In the human sciences, conferences exclusively concerned with methodological issues have become rather scarce on the ground, and we organizers felt that such a conference was well-motivated. The primary aim was to provide a forum where researchers with different methodological interests could get together and exchange experiences and ideas. Indeed all the discussions both in the plenary hall and in the workshops were lively and productive, and they opened many opportunities for future collaborations.

The growing interest in methodological issues and in many current research problems is understandable in the light of the development of the methodological discourse in the human and social sciences over the past four decades. There are some key turning points in that period that warrant brief comment. Firstly, in the late 1970s, there was a rising tide of criticism against the positivistic paradigm, closely followed by the so-called ‘schematic turn’ in psychology as well as by critical feminist studies and postmodern social theory. All of these debates were closely interwoven with keen and critical paradigmatic discussions in the field of philosophy. Although criticism of empirical quantitative and statistical methods was also beginning to gather momentum in the late 1970s, the methodological discourse largely ignored empirical questions from the late 1970s through to the mid-1980’s, which brought us to the so-called ‘linguistic turn’ and the rise of social constructionism and narratology together with ethnographic or discursive and other qualitative empirical methods. From the mid-1980s up until the early 2000s, theoretical debates, and meta-theoretical and philosophical debates in

particular, have been largely absent from the methodological mainstream. The main focus of interest has tended to revolve around rather pragmatic empirical questions.

All of these changes have taken place in a society which itself has been going through various structural and cultural transformations, which in turn have very much reflected developments in the field of science and research. As a result of the narrowing paradigmatic interest, it seems that our empirical knowledge has become an increasingly fragmented and fractured collection of quantitative and qualitative methods and techniques. This portrayal of both the methodological discourse and the skills and qualifications especially of younger generation researchers bears a close resemblance to the characteristics that we social scientists have critically ascribed to the culture of post-modern society. The most crucial challenge for us lies in the absence of paradigmatic principles with which we could reconstruct and rebuild these fractured methods and techniques into a scientifically coherent toolbox. At the same time, however, we must realize that we have a unique opportunity now to fruitfully integrate both qualitative and quantitative methods as well as conceptual ideas of different theoretical schools so that they no longer are disjointed and detached from each other. This might be our biggest methodological challenge today, both in research and in academic teaching. We organizers hope that the conference succeeded in offering new innovative ideas that the participants can collectively reproduce and reconstruct a paradigmatic methodological discourse in our field of research.

Our esteemed plenary speakers at the conference were Professor Julia Brannen from the University of London, UK, and Professor Rianne Mahon from the University of Carleton, Canada; Professor Matti Alestalo, Professor Ritva Nätkin and Academy Research Fellow Matti Hyvärinen from the University of Tampere; and Senior Actuary Hannele Sauli from Statistics Finland. We wish to extend our warmest thanks to all of them for their interesting presentations that were based on their long-term work and experience in the field of childhood and family research as well as methodology in social sciences. The contributions of four of these speakers in this volume are concerned with both historical and current methodological issues.

The conference had six workshops in which researchers presented their 32 papers. We wish to thank all of them as well as all the chairs of the workshops for their successful and productive contributions. The themes of the workshops provide a general

overview of the dilemmas that researchers have found important in their work: 1) Differently familiar: Recognising diversity in family, 2) Qualitative and quantitative comparative research in cultural context, 3) The missing methods: Reconsidering methodology within childhood studies, 4) Using multiple methods in studying children and families, 5) Institutional and professional perspectives and approaches, and 6) Hearing children's voice: Sensitive issues and research positions. This book of proceedings includes altogether 13 papers presented in the workshops.

We would also like to address our warmest thanks to information administrator Anjariitta Korpela for her valuable technical assistance.

The conference was funded by the Academy of Finland, the Department of Sociology and Social Psychology and the Department of Social Policy and Social Work at the University of Tampere, and by the nationwide Graduate School for Family Studies which is coordinated by the University of Jyväskylä. Our grateful thanks to all them for their support.

Irmeli Järventie
Chair of Conference

Miia Lähde
Secretary of Conference

Methodological issues in child and family research

Julia Brannen

Methodologies are shaped in the context of epistemologies and theoretical understandings and by critiques of these lenses (for childhood see Corsaro 2005; Prout and James 1990). I will begin here.

Political context

For the kinds of knowledge we seek to create inform the kinds of methods we use. Social science does not occur in a political vacuum but is shaped by wider ideological and structural forces. As Pertti Alasuutari and I have written in the Introduction to our new Handbook of Social Research Methods to be published in 2008, ‘Social science research not only speaks to particular social conditions, it reflects the social conditions of a society and the theories that dominate at the time. Because there is no unidirectional progress in social and societal development, the theoretical and methodological apparatus available to social scientists change therefore as they too are shaped by historical, structural and cultural contexts.’ (Alasuutari, Brannen and Bickman 2008.)

Family studies in the 1970s and 1980s and later childhood studies have been driven by a strong political orientation that arises from the desire to change the lives of oppressed groups. Methodologies were shaped by the political urgency to find ways of “giving voice” to those in positions of dependency whose agency and access to resources are curtailed. However it is not only marginalised groups to whom research has been required to become more accountable. Social science research is now required to serve those we term users. Such changes have occurred in the context of the growing pervasiveness of neoliberal ideas, in particular increased accountability in public expenditure. Public policy decisions are required to be grounded in evidence-based, scientifically-validated research. This pressure to be useful may be equally influential in shifting what and how social scientists study the social world as are the influences of epistemologies and theories. Similarly, the drive towards economic competitiveness creates an impetus for the advancement of methodology and the promotion of

methodological innovation, a phenomenon we are seeing in the UK as the research council seeks investment particularly in quantitative methods in order to catch up with the role model of the US.

This requirement towards 'scientific' knowledge production means speaking in a number of different tongues not only those of particular social science disciplines. Arguably, it has led to a de-emphasis upon disciplines and to a reduction of methodology to method and technique. Such concerns with method, communication and engagement may distract from addressing theoretical issues and from questioning whose interests research serves and for what?

Theoretical lenses

To turn first to childhood, in a review essay published in the journal *Sociology* in 1994 Margaret O'Brien and I reflected on the emerging sociology of childhood, in particular the ground breaking work of Jens Qvortrup and colleagues (1994). We set out three conceptual and overlapping lenses for understanding children's lives: institutionalisation, familialisation, individualisation and life course perspectives (Brannen and O'Brien 1994). These lenses are not new and may be applied equally to family studies. These conceptual lenses are in part ideological suggesting how childhood and family life ought to be governed.

1. *Age, developmental lifespan and the life course* have long been ways of understanding the business of families and childhood. Sociologists of childhood have been at the forefront in arguing that such notions have rendered children's own agency invisible. By focussing on children as becomings they failed to understand children as beings in the here and now and to understand as having collective interests. Family sociologists in the 1950s and 1960s focussed on nuclear families as the norm and have been criticised for failing to comprehend the changing and diverse life course trajectories of households and their members.
2. Notions of *institutionalisation* have been used to investigate the (growing) reach of institutions settings into the lives of children and young people. Institutionalisation has alerted us to the compartmentalisation of children and

young people into separate and exclusive spheres set apart from the adult world, though in many respects aping it and cutting into the phase of adulthood. Within family studies the concept of the professionalisation of parenting and family life represents a similar concept. Experts and the state have been shown to exercise surveillance over family life while increasingly constructing parents as experts.

3. *Familialisation* has been a central concept in both the study of child and family research. Family socialisation theory has been criticised by childhood researchers for constructing children as pre-social passive objects requiring adult socialisation (Alanen 1998; Corsaro 2005). Within this frame parents are not only providers of material and economic resources but also cultural resources. They are also moral arbiters who exercise control over children (inside and outside the home) and increasingly seen as having responsibility for their educational progress.
4. Theories of *agency and individualisation* have been prominently deployed in the study of youth, family life, childhood and more generally (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995). But discourses of democratisation and ‘individual rights’ go back a long way. Within families, western models of parenting have long emphasised the need for individuality and for the means for a child to develop an identity of its own. Central to current conceptualisations of agency and individualisation is reflexivity – the ability of individuals to reflect upon the self and their situations, actions and decisions – and concepts of identity. Such concepts have been truly revolutionary in the ways in which we as social scientists think about children. On the other hand, individualisation theory has been severely criticised in the recognition that the opportunities for choice remain constrained by structural forces of gender, class and ethnicity (e.g. Brannen and Nilsen 2002, 2006; Smart 2007).

I do not want to argue that there is a neat fit between epistemology, theoretical lenses, political and policy forces and the methods and strategies that we as researchers employ. On the other hand, it does seem to be the case that the conceptualisation of children as agents, as being an important interest group in society does impact directly upon the way research with children has been conducted. Thus Qvortrup in the 1990s sought in his statistical analysis to shift the focal point to children’s share of economic

resources, taking the child as a unit of analysis rather than the family/ household. Ann Solberg back in the 1980s was a pioneer in the way she carried out a study of children as workers in questioning ideas about age.

The neglect of children's agency is reflected in research procedures. In many studies children are never asked for their informed consent; researchers are content to negotiate with gatekeepers - heads, teachers and parents. For example, they typically investigate children's educational progress or role in family life through the reports of adults. In much the same way it was once commonplace for researchers to approach mothers as the spokespersons for family life rather than trying to study other relevant family members. Many researchers still see children by virtue of their 'age' as unreliable rapporteurs of family life. Many researchers prefer hard outcomes measures derived from standardised tests and observations. According to normative developmental life span ideas children lack the necessary competences to be actively involved in research. I am sure you can think of many more examples. Only in the recent decade have more sensitive approaches been employed to take account of the child or young person's own views and experiences.

I propose now to devote the remainder of my time to discussing two contrasting methodological strategies.

Participatory approaches

Participatory methods are part of a more general trend in the social sciences in which research knowledge is understood and criticized as a means of exercising power over those studied (Hammersley 2008). The rationale for participatory methods is to create social change by giving a voice to the disadvantaged and disempowered, as in the case of feminism in the 1970s. This approach has arisen out of a particular kind of politics (see for example the work of Paulo Freire), in which the purpose of research is emancipatory and transformative. The point here is both to change the power relations between researcher and researched and to create change in the way society thinks about the issues.

In this approach decisions about who or what to research, as well as about research method, are made jointly with the people being studied. These ideas go back the action

research movement. They were influential among feminists, and are also currently very influential in the study of children and young people (see for example Reason and Bradbury 2001; MacNaughton and Smith 2005).

The grounds for participatory methods with children are varied

1. Participatory methods are part of the theoretical quest to see childhood as a socially constructed domain (James et al 1998) and to see children as social subjects (Christensen and James 2000; Mayall 2002).
2. They redress power inequalities between the adult and child in the research process.
3. Children are seen as *experts on* their childhood and so participatory methods provide much greater insight into childhood than do traditional methods (see for example Alderson 2001).
4. Participatory methods benefit the individuals who take part: “Doing research helps children (perhaps disadvantaged ones especially) to gain more skills, confidence and possibly determination to overcome their disadvantages than adult researchers working on their behalf could give them.” (Alderson 2001: 151).
5. Participatory methods generate the ‘true’ voice of the child.

Participatory methods embrace different models. In model 1, the aim is to create *collaborative knowledge* that is produced and owned by children. In model 2, researchers take the view that researchers can *learn* from children (Thorne 1993) of whatever age and that their activities, interests, beliefs and experiences are worthy of being listened to and have to be respected. However, whichever model is chosen, the research strategy is researcher led and the decision to adopt a model is usually a researcher decision.

These models have different implications. The model (1) of knowledge as collaboration has implications for the *value* given to research knowledge as compared with lay knowledge. Model 2 (that researchers learn from children) refers to a *hermeneutic* standpoint - understanding children’s own worlds through their own eyes. The latter model stops short at the analysis phase of research. It does not extend to prioritizing the actors’ voices over those of the researchers. Rather knowledge generation

takes place through a bottom up approach in which the researcher seek concepts that best fit children's situations and experiences (Nilsen 2005). The role of researcher as analyst remains important.

In a study I carried out on children's concepts of care and their experiences of family life we only went so far down the participatory route. In the fieldwork we employed a number of different methods that would actively engage children: questionnaires, vignettes, genealogies, maps of significant others in order to counteract some of the imbalance of power inherent in a one to one interview between adult and child and to gain insight into children's understandings of their lives. We created meaningful ways of seeking children's informed consent, for example helping children to practice saying no if they did not want to answer a specific question and so on (Brannen et al 2000). However we did to some extent adopt a participatory approach in the dissemination phase of the study (Brannen 2002). We went back to one of the schools where we had found some of our informants. We presented the research findings to a group of children in the same age grade as took part in the original study and ask them to comment on the findings. Moreover we sought their permission to video their commentaries on the research with a view to presenting the video to practitioners and policymakers in the dissemination of the research. As the project developed it became clear that one of the main aims of the work was to demonstrate the children's expertise and competence as commentators on research as well as on family life, the original focus of the study. The video made an impact on adult audiences and displayed graphically children's competence to conduct themselves in a public setting (making a video). The issue and one of our original concerns - how far these children's responses supported our original interpretation of the data, which they largely did - became very much a secondary issue. On the other hand, this approach had little influence upon children's own exercise of agency. Notably the school said there was no time to enable us to show the video to the children.

One critique of the participatory approach in general is not simply that it can put the researcher out of business but that it relegates research knowledge to a relativist position in which 'multiple conceptions of or discourses about the world' are given equal value (Hammersley 2008). We need to be sceptical about claiming certainty for our research findings while also not going to so far as to claim that findings are all equally likely to

be false. As Harding (1991) has put the matter, we should not give up on telling 'less false stories'. We should take care in making judgments about the interpretations we place on our data not to make them 'solely according to whether or not they are validated by our own cultural communities.' (Hammersley 2008). So I would agree with Hammersley that 'Scientific validity is not the same as cultural acceptability' (ibid.).

Multi- strategies in studying family life

A second set of methodological strategies that contrast with participatory approaches focuses not on individuals and collectivities of individuals or classes but seeks understanding of interacting social groups and their practices. My focus now is on families and children as consisting in ties that are fluid, temporal, and spatially located. The current theoretical emphasis in family studies has changed towards a relational and negotiative approach that stresses the chosen nature of family ties (Morgan 1996). One cannot easily apply participatory as emancipatory methods to the study of families without recognizing that families are composed of different interests and are differentiated by power relations. To explore relationships as complex sets of relationships and practices it is necessary to focus on all the different actors who participate in family life. No single perspective alone suffices. Family life cannot easily be studied directly. We may choose from multiple methods including documents, individual interviews, group interviews, observations, diaries and questionnaires, while some researchers are incorporating visual methods and are thinking of ways of understanding multi sensory aspects of family and personal life. We may draw upon multiple investigators, and multiple informants. Within the category of interviews we have to decide what interview approach to go for - directive or nondirective, structured questions, narrative questions or an unstructured life stories. These are the grist to the methodological mill. Most of these strategies are not new but their application needs revisiting given the current fashion to focus on individual voice and agency. In contrast to participatory approaches, they inevitably place considerable demands upon the research analyst.

In accordance with the popularity of a constructionist perspective in this field, many methodological discussions focus on interpreting informants' accounts as products of the research process. While this is undoubtedly important, it is also in my view part of

our job to understand family life as *lived realities* as experienced by each family member and across time – family ties persist even if often only in our heads. The methodological challenges tend to focus not only on issues of interpretation of data (epistemology) but also on the social context and opportunity structures (a realist ontology).

I will now focus on an example from my own research in which we interviewed up to eight family members in a four generation family and discuss the methodological procedures we used. The study focussed on time – on change and continuity over the generations and the ways that family members negotiated work and care over the life course of each member and on the resources given and received intergenerationally (Brannen et al 2004).

The oldest great grandparent generation was born in the interwar period - between 1911 and 1921

The middle or grandparent generation was born around and just after World War II – 1940 and 1948

The parent generation with young children was born between 1965 and 1975 and grew up in the neoliberal policies of the Thatcher and post Thatcher years

In the analysis we identified three challenges:

(a) how to bring into our analysis the influence of historical context on their life experiences and world views;

(b) how to apply a life course approach - the study covered three generations currently occupying the statuses of great grandparents, grandparents, adult children, parents;

(c) how to take account of family members' interpretations and in particular the current time frames and perspectives they adopted in the course of a long interview.

We used multiple informants, multiple investigators (4) and interviews that encompassed different approaches. We employed a biographic-interpretive method involving an analytic separation of the 'lived life' from the 'told story'. Our interviewing approach drew on a particular biographical narrative approach (Wengraf, 2001). This we adapted dividing it into three parts. In the first, respondents were

invited to give an account of their lives from childhood onwards, with a minimum of guidance and intervention from the interviewer. This provided an opportunity for the respondent to present his or her own *gestalt*. In the second part, the interviewer invited the respondent to elaborate on salient events and experiences that had figured in the initial narrative. Finally, using a more traditional semi-structured approach; we posed additional questions relating to the specific foci of the study. Interviews lasted on average three hours. All interviews were recorded and transcribed. The analysis proceeded through three stages, working from the individual level (of researcher with the individual's interview material), to the kin group level involving a team discussion of the family), and culminating in a comparison of the case study kin groups, with one researcher taking responsibility for a particular theme of the analysis.¹

(a) One challenge was to fill in the *historical context*. It is easy to study a particular generation ahistorically. However our families spanned the twentieth century. In that time the conditions of material life had changed dramatically as fewer workers were employed in manual occupations. Educational opportunities, especially for women, had opened up dramatically. The postwar period saw more upward social mobility than ever before in Britain. Over the last decade or so social mobility has flattened off even with the significant increase in rates of staying on at school after 16 for what we call the current generation of parents (Blanden et al 2002).

The great grandparent generation saw the arrival of state pensions, making them the first mass generation to be able to pass on money to younger generations (Kohli 2004); even if the amounts were small, this gave them a source of material power historically unprecedented in many families. The grandparents, born in the post war period, grew up by contrast in a climate of economic certainty - near full *male* employment, and ideas about maternal attachment that served to support the British government's need to create jobs for men after their return from war, relegating women to the home. The

¹ In the first stage, each team member was responsible for writing a summary (up to 10 pages) of each interview she or he had conducted. First, after the interview, the researcher wrote up their recollection and impressions of the interview. Then a detailed summary was written when the transcript became available; the material was organised under a number of specified themes and a 'life history chronology'. Second, each of the four team members was responsible for carrying out several analyses at the kin group level for three of the 12 families (up to 20 pages) in which cross-generational comparisons were made in each family. These first two stages have provided a basis for building the final analysis in which we compared the intergenerational kin groups according to the analyses generated in phase 2, working with particular themes such as fatherhood.

youngest generation - new parents were brought up in the neo liberalism of the Thatcher years and the succession.

By filling in the historical context we were alerted to what is *taken for granted* in people's accounts, forgotten or overlaid by interpretations given in the interview that pertained to their current values and perceptions. If we address ourselves only to a one-dimensional empirical reality and do not listen to the underlying 'silent narratives', we are indeed ignoring a key sociological resource - 'the sociological imagination' (Brannen and Nilsen 2005). Understanding life stories as 'pockets of history' is difficult not least because informants do not necessarily refer to historical context and because they are concerned discursively to knit their narratives about the past with their present discourses (Nielsen 2003). Practical strategies that helped us to do this included:

- Employing a historian on the team
- Creating time lines of historical events and relating these to informants' own chronologies
- Bringing these perspectives to bear through a structural approach as well as focusing on informants' own interpretations of their lives:

(b) We also unpicked accounts of family life in relation to a particular *life course phase and each informant's positioning in the generational order*. In recounting the stories of their lives informants typically moved between different life course phases (and historical perspectives) that shaped the form of their stories. Great grandmothers for example looked back from the vantage point of a late life course phase. Their long lives and their experience of considerable social change over their lives provided them with a great number of interpretative contexts (Nielsen 2003). In their relationships to their great grandchildren they were both objectively and subjectively distant from them: because of the presence of grandparents in the kinship chain and their greater prominence in great grandchildren's lives. We noticed that accounts of great grandmotherhood were 'thinner' than accounts of grandmotherhood.

In studying patterns of intergenerational family relations, we had to take account of informants' positionings as both adult children and parents at the same time. Issues of debt and dependency, reciprocity and independence are negotiated both in the context of the interview in giving moral accounts of the self but also in terms of intergenerational

family relations and dynamics. Studies suggest that those who transmit resources in families are typically more likely to acknowledge this than those who receive resources. In the four-generation study, elderly people on the cusp of frail old age wanted to remain independent and to be seen to be managing. They did not want to be, or to be seen to be, a burden on their families. Also some adult children in the middle generation born just after the war did not mention the help they had received materially from parents in contrast to the accounts of their parents.

Such unwillingness to give up independence and to fail to report assistance cannot only be understood in relation to the life course positions vis a vis different generations. In a cross national analysis of young people's views of the future we found that young Norwegians who rely upon the welfare state and who had help from parents did not acknowledge this help but instead emphasised their own independence and efforts. Acknowledging the need for care is shaped by the *current discursive and structural context*. Western societies currently put great store by the discourse of love. Family love, like romantic love, denotes love as a gift which by definition rules out obligation. To speak of love as obligation in the same breath is to destroy the meaning of the concept. Moreover the dominant public discourse of western neo liberal political societies is one of individual responsibility rather than a story of linked lives and linked generations. Accounts, like lives, are multi faceted and full of contradictions.

Strategies adopted here included:

- Adopting a life story approach in the interview and focusing on particular phases in the follow up questions
- Analytically separating out a chronology of life course events and their timing from their life stories
- Creating analytic life course phase themes in the preliminary analysis
- Exploring how in the interviews informants positioned themselves in relation to life course phases and identities

(c) The *time frames* from which informants spoke and the accounts they gave differed and could change over the course of the interview. It was obvious when the oldest (great grandparent) generation was taking an overview of their life. Reflecting their experience of nearly a century of major social change, some recounted public accounts as well as

private stories (Cornwell 1984), engaging in meta narratives of Progress in which they told stories of ‘real struggle’ of moral right over material degradation. Some great grandmothers (and grandmothers) viewed the past through the rose-tinted spectacles of the ‘good old days’ contrasted with what they *currently* viewed as typical of today’s childhoods some aspects of which they were disapproving (see also Samuel and Thompson 1980). At other points in their interviews, especially when speaking about changing educational expectations and employment opportunities for women, they took a present day vantage point: seeing the past as wanting by present day standards. In taking a current standpoint grandmothers who were mothers of adult daughters (in law) were currently witnessing them struggling to combine parenthood with fulltime employment in some cases. While they did not identify with them since they (the grandmothers) had not worked when their children were very young, they empathised with their daughters – especially with the financial need to work. Thus one informant could move between judging childhood from the values of her time as a mother with a young child while at another point in the interview subscribe to current values concerning present day expectations of motherhood.

Strategies employed here include looking at the forms of speech. Argumentation and rationalisation are commonly employed to explain or explicate how the person thinks about a matter or event from their current time frame and position.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I endorse participatory approaches in the study of childhood where children as informants are enabled to tell their own stories, are listened to and participate actively as research informants. But I would want to argue very strongly that there is a role for the independent analyst and to be sceptical that in claiming to give a voice to marginalized groups that this necessarily gives them greater control to shape knowledge and public agenda.

The role of the research analyst comes very much into its own when one has to study multiple perspectives, positionings and power interests. Studying only one viewpoint in a study of four generation families would be very unsatisfactory. Moreover, an ontological focus on family life as lived reality is important especially when family life spans a century of huge social change as well as seeing family life as socially

constructed. In the four generation family study we separated out *analytically* the ontologically realist aspects of the lives of those we studied in terms of historical period, opportunity structures of class, gender and generation while we also took an interpretive standpoint concerning the way family members exercise agency both in their own lives and in the telling of their life stories in the research encounter. In order to do justice to both, the role of analyst was crucial: notably by being attentive to the ways informants shifted between different time frames, life course and historical phases within a single interview, by paying attention to what was silenced in informants' accounts, by taking account of 'events'. Events happen even though we write our own history. Events, both public and private, are of interest in themselves to us as researchers as well as to our informants. Sybille Bedford, writing her autobiography of her life in Europe in the 1920s, notes that what actually enabled her to write her book *Jigsaw* (and what gives it its great strength) are the events, the relating of which she says enabled her to unlock the characters and most importantly herself. It is crucial to understand how people interpret the world while at the same time seeking to remain true to the classical sociological endeavour of seeing the links between the individual and society – in C Wright Mills' terms the dialectic between structure and agency (Mills 1959).

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Cross-national comparisons of early learning and child care: What can political scientists contribute?

Rianne Mahon

As a political scientist, I have been engaged in research comparing early learning and child care as well as arrangements for parental leave, in different countries, with a particular focus on Canada and Sweden. As such my work explores the “big picture” – the arrangements that shape demand for child care and the human and financial resources available to provide it. I am interested in how different societies respond to the broader push for new family policies that stems from changes in families (the turn from the male breadwinner model to the adult-earner family) and labour markets. Such comparisons allow us to think about our own experiences in terms of what is unique or distinctive and what needs to be seen as part of a more general pattern. Although I am especially interested in the politics shaping these responses, I have not confined my search for understanding to the tools offered by my original discipline, but draw on theoretical work being done in other disciplines. In what follows, I reflect on what can be learned from some of these theoretical contributions.

Ways of classifying family policies

Gosta Esping-Andersen (1990, 1999), the Danish sociologist, has provided one particularly helpful way of locating a particular country’s child care arrangements. He does so in a way that suggests that patterns of child care provision tend to reflect the broader social policy regime, i.e. the allocation of responsibilities as between states, families and markets. He has identified three main social policy regimes. The first, the liberal regime, leaves as much as possible to families and markets, with the state playing a residual role. This means that the majority of families will have to rely on self-provision (parents working shifts; grandparent care) or purchase what they can afford on the market, where private – both commercial and non-profit – providers predominate. The public role for most families is likely to be limited to tax deductions for receipted child care expenses, information provision and some regulation. Corporations may also be encouraged to provide child care for their employees also

via tax incentives. For the poor, there may be means-tested subsidies as well as narrowly targeted “head start” programs. If there is a publicly funded maternal or parental leave program, the replacement rate is low and the time tends to be limited, so as not to lead to the deterioration of human capital.

Esping-Andersen’s exemplar of the liberal regime is the United States, but the basic pattern also holds in other Anglo-American countries like Australia and Canada. As Julia O’Connor, Ann Orloff and Sheila Shaver (1999) have noted, however, there can be important differences among liberal social policy regimes and this has implications for child care. Thus the broader social policy package in Australia and the United Kingdom has been more generous than that in Canada and the U.S., but has done so in a way that supported the male breadwinner-female caregiver family. It is only recently that the British government has begun to promote women’s labour force participation in part by promoting the expansion of non-parental child care (often, however, under private auspice).

The “conservative-corporatist” regime is a more generous one when it comes to social insurance provision but when it comes to child care, it has, as its name suggests, tended to continue to favour the male breadwinner-female caregiver family form through various tax and benefit packages. As a result, non-parental child care tends to be underdeveloped. Of course, countries with such regimes – such as Germany, Austria, and France – are not static, a point which Esping-Andersen has not addressed, nor are they all the same. For example, France offers universal pre-school and both offer support for nonparental child care. In both countries, however, there is a strong preference for home-based care – either the child’s own or another’s - as this mimics traditional arrangements. Other conservative countries also have well-developed pre-school for children 3 and over, but this is provided on a part-day basis only. A better way of describing these countries’ child care arrangements, therefore is “neo-familial” as they seek to adapt to women’s rising labour force participation rate in ways designed to preserve traditional values (Mahon 2002). Thus for instance, if there are state-financed maternal or parental leave programs, these are of relatively long (3-4 years) duration. In these regimes, mothers are likely not to return to work until their children start pre-school and then only on a part time basis.

Esping-Andersen calls the third “social democratic”. It tends to be characterised

by universal access to publicly financed and, often, publicly-provided child care, combined with parental leave at a high replacement rate. Sweden is his exemplar but the other Nordic countries are usually included. As Bergqvist et al (1999) have argued, however, there are important differences in the Nordic countries's child care arrangements. In some ways, Finland combines elements of the 'neo-familial' (home care allowance) and social democratic (subjective right to child care) regimes.

More broadly, Esping-Andersen's social democratic category catches some important features but ignores others, especially features linked to the promotion of gender equality, not just the adult worker family. It also too closely links this pattern to social democracy. While it is true that social democratic parties have played an important role in constructing the Nordic regimes, they have not done it on their own.¹ Moreover, social democratic parties have governed other countries that have not developed such a regime. I therefore have preferred to call the third regime an egalitarian one as this 1) does not narrowly identify the regime with social democracy and 2) highlights additional features designed to promote gender and class equality. Thus in addition to the features described above, this model will emphasise high quality, centre-based care provided by skilled workers, receiving equitable wages and good working conditions. There will be mechanisms to induce fathers to share parental leave (e.g. "daddy months" or quotas). Finally child care centres will be democratically run, with children, parents and communities given adequate opportunity for voicing their hopes and concerns.

This typology, especially as revised, focuses attention on important differences in patterns of child care provision and brings out the consequences for class and gender equality. Thus liberal forms of provision do little to address class or gender equality. The residual nature of public support for child care means that many low and middle income families cannot afford high quality early learning and care for their children. This and the limited nature of leave provision make it harder for women to combine work and family life and do nothing to get men to share familial care. The conservative, social-insurance based regimes tend to preserve class/status differentials even while they offer more generous support than the liberal. Moreover, support has reinforced

¹ For instance, feminist organizations, parent groups, pedagogues as well as social liberals have played a part in the development of the Swedish and Danish systems.

traditional gender roles, at least until recently. The turn to neo-familialism modifies but does not fundamentally alter this. Those countries that have pursued a more egalitarian agenda – Iceland’s 1/3,1/3,1/3 parental leave policy; the subjective right to child care in Finland; democratic governance arrangements in Denmark; unionisation and solidaristic wages bargaining in Sweden – have done much more to advance gender and class equality, though none has achieved the ideal.

Recent work on social policy regimes suggests that more is at stake than class and gender equality. In our increasingly diverse societies, marked by migration from Eastern Europe and the Global South, there is also the question of racialised inequalities. A recent book by Ruth Lister, Fiona Williams, Anneli Anttonen et al – *Gendering Citizenship in Western Europe: new challenges for citizenship research in a cross-national context* (2007) – takes up this question. Following an analysis of migration patterns, they examine the way that new forms of care arrangements – especially tax incentives and/or allowances enabling families to purchase child care by another in the home – have supported the growth of a global care chain. In particular, Spain, France, Italy and Greece have promoted the “immigrant in the home” model of care. While they focus on European examples, Canada has long offered special immigration permits for live-in caregivers (Bakin and Stasiulis 2005). One of the consequences is the growth of child care as a form of low wage, precarious work and the reinforcement of gendered, racialised citizenship inequalities.

What explains cross-national differences?

How do we account for these patterns of cross-national differences in child care provision? Clearly the social policy regime approach draws on historical-institutionalist political economy. The basic thesis here is that the way societies have responded to new challenges at key moments in the past creates an institutional legacy that shapes their response to current challenges.

As previously suggested, Esping-Andersen’s original work (1985; 1999) emphasised class organised (or not) into political parties. In other words, where the working class was able to construct alliances with other classes (first farmers, then white collar workers) through its (social democratic) political party, it has been able to use its political power to construct a social democratic social policy regime. When

new challenges like the erosion of the male breadwinner-female caregiver family form arose, the state then responded by developing the kind of child care and parental leave arrangements discussed above. Where working class parties remained weak or non-existent, liberal social policy regimes took root and these shaped responses to subsequent challenges.

The conservative-corporatist regimes are more complicated. Among other things, as Kersbergen argues, religion intersected with class politics such that Christian Democratic parties, with their socially conservative values, were in a position to leave their stamp on social policy. Philip Manow argues that religion mattered not only in these regimes. Where non-conforming Protestantism thrived, so too did a substantial voluntary sector. Thus Britain's preference for child care under private auspice reflects not only market liberalism but also non-conformist Protestantism's emphasis on self help and autonomy from the state. In contrast, where the Lutheran church prevailed, the state has tended to be seen as part of society, and there has been little opposition to public provision.

Others have called attention to the important role played by women's groups, especially in putting "new" issues like the need for child care on the public agenda. In other words, historically-created institutions matter but, on their own, do not determine outcomes. "New politics" created by new social movements that surfaced in the 1960s, including second wave feminism, has often played a critical role. The within-regime comparisons by O'Connor, Orloff and Shaver and Bergqvist et al, referred to above, both highlighted the role played by women's groups. Many of the chapters in *Child care policy at the crossroads: gender and welfare state restructuring* (2002) also bring out the role of women's organising in shaping the child care policies of countries as diverse as Japan, Poland, Australia and Canada (including the distinct francophone province of Quebec) as do the chapters in *Who Cares? Women's Work, Childcare and Welfare State Redesign* (2001). In a recent publication Terhi Aalto and Anne Maria Holli (2007) show how Finnish women have sought to bridge differences between maternal feminists, who favour home care allowances, and other feminists, pushing for public child care.

Other actors too have played important roles. Thus Borchorst (2002) argues that the presence in Denmark of an articulate group of pedagogues contributed to that society's emphasis on early learning and care. At the local level, parent groups have often

been important sources of pressure for change, as my research on the politics of child care in Sweden suggests. Child care advocates may get support from other quarters as well. Thus in addition to secular, republican parties, pro-natalist forces played a role in the early development of France's child care system (Morgan 2002). More recently, pro—natalist elements have been important in putting child care on the Japanese agenda (Peng 2002).

Business organisations have also played their part, sometimes in unexpected ways. Thus the federal Conservative government in Canada was recently forced to scale back its plans to expand child care spaces by offering tax incentives to business when business groups made it clear that, while they thought child care was important, they were not interested in getting directly involved (Collier and Mahon 2007). In Sweden, a group sponsored by the Swedish Employers Association (SAF) began to push for public funding for commercial child care in the 1980s. When the social democratic government passed legislation to block this, they mobilised at the local level, especially in the influential municipalities that make up the greater Stockholm area (Mahon 2005). Finally, in response to the exploitation of immigrant women care-givers, groups have arisen to articulate their rights.

Some of the recent literature suggests that the historical institutionalism errs in stressing the dead weight (the thesis of “path dependent responses” referred to above) institutions at the expense of ideas. There are two ways of looking at ideas. One, suggested by theorists like Colin Crouch (2005), reminds us that dominant ideas embedded in existing institutional structures do not tell the whole story. Although such ideas may have beaten their rivals at a critical juncture in the past, “defeated” ideas need not be extinguished. Thus for example while the Swedish Social Democrats abolished the Care Allowance when they returned to office in 2004, the idea was kept alive by the Christian Democrats and elements within the Centre party. When the bourgeois alliance returned to office in 2006, they were in a position to push for its reinstatement.

A second way of looking at the role of ideas is as policy paradigms, developed by epistemic communities or experts, often with transnational links. One relevant example is the “social investment” paradigm that has emerged to challenge the older Keynesian welfare “social consumption” paradigm (Jenson). The social investment paradigm, which international organisations like the OECD have been involved in spreading

(Mahon 2006), highlights the importance of policies focused on children and youth, including early learning and child care. Such ideas can be taken up in different ways by diverse actors in various national settings. The concrete policies that result may differ, often in predictable ways, but the spread of such ideas helps to open the way for new public initiatives, even at a time of welfare retrenchment.

Governance structures

The comparative social policy regime literature can offer insight into how differences in national patterns of child care provision reflect broader social policy patterns in each country and the normative assumptions underpinning these. They do not tell us enough, however, about a more classic “political science” concern – governance structures. Yet as the OECD’s thematic review of early childhood education and care, *Starting Strong* (2006) made it clear that national-local arrangements are critical to this policy field for a number of reasons. First, child care programmes operate in a diversity of local contexts (and hence needs). Clearly sparsely populated areas encounter a different set of challenges to metropolitan areas. In addition, some places have substantial populations with diverse ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. Devolution to the local level allows for greater sensitivity to such needs.

Second, the field is simply too complex to manage adequately from above. Early childhood education and care is comprised of a broad range of programmes and arrangements – regulated centre-based and family child care, school-based kindergarten, independent preschools, drop-in centres, family resource centres with toy-lending libraries and other supports for home-based care, and a plethora of informal care arrangements including “kin care.” As *Starting Strong II* noted, “the more numerous providers and fragmented provision patterns in the early childhood field make it difficult for central governments to ensure quality and a rational provision of services in the absence of devolved local management (OECD, 2006:50).” *Starting Strong*, which makes a strong case for an integrated approach to ECEC, also adds that local authorities have often shown a greater willingness to pursue innovative experiments that cut across traditional divisions.

Decentralisation also allows for greater involvement of parents and, more broadly, a democratic organization and management of ECEC services. In fact, one of the

leading international experts in this field, Peter Moss, has made a strong pitch for ECEC as “sites of democratic practice.” Clearly this is most likely to occur in ECEC systems that give local authorities an important role to play. Such an approach is even more important in neighbourhoods with diverse populations, where ECEC institutions can function as “spaces for participation and interculturalism...based on the principle of democratic participation” (2007:13). Like *Starting Strong*, however, Moss recognizes that local ECEC systems are best able to function this way when they form part of a supportive set of intergovernmental arrangements.

In other words, devolution functions best within a coherent national framework. For the authors of *Starting Strong II*, a strong national policy framework, which establishes a common vision, a coherent approach to funding, appropriate programme standards, and clear accountability procedures, is necessary to ensure equity and cohesion. In the absence of such a supportive legislative, administrative and fiscal framework, devolution will simply result in wide differences in access, affordability and quality. At the same time, it is important to strike a balance between the central government’s capacity to establish the means to ensure equity and local authorities’ scope for adaptation to local needs and for innovation.

Until recently, however, little scholarly attention has focused on these arrangements. In the broader social policy literature, Maurizio Ferrera’s recent (2005) contribution – *The Boundaries of Welfare: European Integration and the new Spatial Politics of Social Protection* - stands out in this regard. Daniel Wincott (2006) has examined how devolution of authority to Scotland and Wales has affected the Blair government’s child care policies. He found that distinct regional historical legacies contributed to different outcomes, with Scotland in a much better position to take advantage of the new opportunities provided by devolution and new funds for child care. Drawing on the pathbreaking work of Stein Rokkan, Luc Turgeon’s comparison of child care in France, Great Britain and Sweden leads him to reinforce the message from *Starting Strong*: countries with strong local governments, with access to their own tax base, are in a much better position to construct sustainable child care systems, especially when supported by strong intergovernmental networks.

Conclusions

In conclusion, I'd like to highlight three points. First, political scientists doing cross-national comparisons can illuminate the larger context within which child care policies are established and these in turn affect the broader demand for child care, the resources, human and financial, available to provide it, and the pattern of provision (familial or quasi-familial, centre-based, public or private). Such comparisons reveal the broader range of alternative ways of organising child care. They also enable us to assess the implications each holds for class, gender and racial-ethnic equality. It is also important to look at governance arrangements, especially those between national and local governments. Very decentralised systems, like Canada's, will be left with a patchwork of provision whereas very centralised systems stifle local innovation.

Social policy regime theory, with its emphasis on the institutional legacy of previous social policy choices, has done much to reveal these broader patterns. Its thesis of a "path dependent response" – i.e. that previous choices shape how societies will respond to new challenges – may however lead to too static a view, especially when prediction slips into prescription. It is therefore important to develop a more dynamic view. To paraphrase Marx, people make choices, if not in circumstances of their own choosing. There are new social forces and new ideas that can create important openings, especially for those living in countries with "liberal" or "neo-familial" regimes.

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Scientific critics towards family work and policy

Ritva Nätkin

In this article I pay attention to the ways families are helped and treated in the welfare states and the way this work is conceptualized in the social sciences. By welfare-state-based family work I refer to all those work forms which professionals in a welfare state use to work with families. Thus the concept of family work differs from that used in family policy and family ideology. Family policy is structural but family work provides families with guidance, instruction as well as assistance in growing a healthy family. Families are helped, served, activated, trained, counselled, and consulted. Family workers gather information about them, determine their condition or assess their functionality, and seek to prevent problems from emerging. If problems do emerge, however, families are repaired. In general, the aim is to keep families together, but sometimes children have to be separated from their parents and handed over to foster care, or spouses are helped in getting a divorce. Family work, or family-centred work, can also mean that if help given to an individual family member does not seem to have an effect, the entire family will be taken into account. Sometimes it is even thought that family work replaces one's own family, for example, in a situation in which a desire to turn institutional care or service home- or family-like is expressed. In the current "post-expansive" welfare state (see Julkunen 2001; Rantala & Sulkunen 2005), in which municipal functions are decreased and third sector projects increased, the field of family work is very scattered.

In discussions about family work and policy, family often seems to form a homogeneous category that functions as a collective, a community. Family workers talk neutrally about clients and professionals as well as about parents and children, although they work with mothers and fathers and girls and boys. The gender of clients or professionals is rarely reflected on in everyday family work. Of parents, the ones encountered most often are mothers, very often single mothers. The expression "family is repaired" does sound abstract and paradoxical in a situation in which single mothers and their emotional relationships with their children are supported in everyday family

work but in which children's fathers are left ignored or released from responsibility. Family work is thus justified by the fact that it serves the best interests of children.

At the same time as families are supported, they are positioned in the middle of power relations. Norms of a good and functional family are created. Special attention is directed at families that do not fulfil these norms. What raises questions about justification of family work is the multiplicity of different forms of family work. On whose initiative professional help, guidance or control is started? When do family members themselves call for help, when is it offered against their will, and when is it about complex processes in which the motives of intervention and the relationships of involved parties are in continuous motion? What is family work aiming at? Are the means used correct and is people's right of self-determination taken into account?

Critique and discussion

Based on debates about the state, families, experts, professionals and gender as well as about social scientific criticism in the last 20–30 years, I can identify six critical approaches to the mainstream of family work in a welfare state.¹ Some critical discussions have already merged into the mainstream, which itself is not a coherent whole either. (See Nätkin & Vuori 2007, 28-35.) They all take a stand on what professional "family intervention" means and whether or not it is justified. They ponder on the responsibilities and positions of professionals and families as well as the drawbacks of concern about families and children. They also take a stand on the question of gender both within families and from the viewpoint of relationships between professionals and their clients and how the borderline between public and private is drawn.

The liberalist view criticizes the regulation practiced by professionals and the state for intruding into family relationships that are considered private. The state should regulate as little as possible. Society fares well when people are allowed to be responsible for their lives themselves and to make their own choices. This view has also been justified by economic grounds: the increasing of state expenditure is not rational and the markets provide needed services better than work financed by tax revenue. According to the

¹ I thank Jaana Vuori for the shared ideas.

liberalist view, gender divisions within families are not only matters of choice by families themselves, but also natural relationships. Female and male individuals have their own tasks in families, and disturbing these through outside intervention can only lead to a situation in which families end up faring badly. (Smart & Neale 1999, 174-199.)

Critique of interventionism comes from a different direction politically. What it has in common with liberalist critique is the suspicion it harbours of state activities and “intruding”. It is an offspring of Marxist-inflected, civilization-critical sociology and class theory in the 1960s and 1970s. State-practiced regulation is considered as top-down control and normalization that is directed at the working class. The interpretation has often been masculine, because it usually talks about families as solid units that (working-class) men defend against intruders. (See Donzelot 1977.) Women are criticized for joining forces with professionals or for working as “state agents” in their professions as therapists. In this way women partake in disciplining and normalizing men and children. In the background thus lies the same kind of view on the natural gender division of the family as in the liberalist view. Families should be safe havens in the cruel world of capitalist relationships. (See Lasch 1977.)

Critique of interventionism has continued after the 1980s, but it is no longer clearly committed to the Marxist class analysis and critique of the state. J.-P. Roos (2002), for example, criticizes information security problems related to clients of child protective services, according to which the authorities have the right to obtain information about bank accounts or police records or case histories, and clients in this way lose their constitutional right to privacy. Roos’s statements about the unambiguous rights of biological parents also fit liberalist critique well. The practices of child protective services and child custody are indeed painful issues in family work.

Critique of family ideology is above all a feminist interpretation of the relationships between the state, professionals and families. It also has its background in Marx’s theory of society, but it focuses on dismantling the masculinity of both liberalist and state-interventionist family conceptions. Critique of family ideology focuses on the following issues: limiting women’s activities to home as wives, mothers and housekeepers, taking families for granted and considering them privileged targets of societal attention and the only good growth environment for children. (See

Barrett & McIntosh 1982.) Families should not be supported but gotten rid of as the kind of institution we know it. Above all it wants to get rid of idealizing the nuclear family composed of a father, mother and children and of despising other family forms and collective solutions. The elements which make up critique of family ideology include dismantling the mother myth or motherhood ideology, defining housework as being beneficial to society and at the same time to men and as a way of exploiting women, opposing family heteronormativity as well as emphasizing families as societal issues. Professionals are seen to join forces with men and with the bourgeois state and thus to maintain both gender inequality and class society. The interpretation in its logic is parallel with the state-interventionist interpretation but opposite in its gender analysis. Family ideology is considered to be a fairly uniform subordinating structure, and even if the image of a homogeneous family is dismantled, the image of family work does not become very complicated.

Feminist critique, which focused particularly in medicalizing expert power in the 1980s, is already close to the next form of critique, the women's alliance interpretation. It paid attention not only to the control over women and their bodies, but also to the differences between different groups of professionals. For example, the increasing control of doctors over deliveries signified that the position of midwives and the help they provided as women and closer to women worsened (Nätkin 1997, 34-61). Thus a distinction was drawn between the ways in which different groups of professionals and women were treated in what helps and supports women (and children) and in what in turn increases the normalization and control exerted over them.

The women's alliance interpretation emerged in the 1980s largely to argue against and to complement critique of interventionism. The observation was that family work professionals are female particularly in lower-hierarchy care and nursing professions. The interpretation has been applied particularly when the history of the welfare state has been looked into by gathering information about women's active input in the emergence of the service system of the welfare state, about what are termed the maternalist roots of the welfare state. (See Bock & Thane 1992; Koven & Michel 1993; Anttonen & Henriksson & Nätkin 1994.) According to the women's alliance interpretation, the borderline between the public and the private emerged to secure men's benefits: women's lives were limited to home and family, which they did not want to settle with.

(Eräsaari & Julkunen & Silius 1995.) This limit has indeed become a political question particularly in gender issues, and women still cross and mix the border as clients and professionals as well as active organization members and politicizers of the family issue. According to the interpretation, women professionals and clients have “become allies” to oppose to the arbitrariness of the male head of the family as well as the double standards prevailing in society which protect the benefits men have gained. Women, men and children are looked at as separate actors, although, according to the interpretation, women at first tried to enter the public domain “with a child in their arms”. As the image of the homogeneous family was broken, women sensitivity was seen also to protect the best interests of children.

What the interpretation has in common with critique of family ideology is that family life is seen as political, and its internal relationships are explored as divided according to gender. However, pervasive critique of family seems to be alien to it, because it sees that women in many ways try to improve their family life and to increase women’s possibilities to act as mothers, wives as well as female wage earners. Deviating from family-ideological approach, it looks at womanhood particularly through motherhood and professionalism. Women’s alliance and the emphasis on the significance of care, according to the interpretation, do not refer to a positive relationship only; relationships between professionals and women are also looked at through contradictions and conflicts. Particularly class relations among women are paid attention to. Family heteronormativity is dismantled by breaking the ties of women to marriage, but otherwise sexuality and the diversity of family forms have been overshadowed in the analyses.

The alliance between professionals and women is also emphasized by *partnership thinking*, but this relationship is generally looked at from a gender-neutral angle. This point of view is typical of internal discourses in social and family work (see Juhila 2006). It is a counter-discourse to interventionism and liberal critique emphasizing control and norms. Partnership thinking draws from critique of hierarchical expertise and strives for new expertise, in which correct knowledge and authority are not only in the possession of professionals and problems are not categorical but situational. (See Bauman 1987.) Professionals and their clients share a common concern and seek to solve the situation through co-operation and negotiation. In the core of this line of

thinking lie children as actors both dependent and detached from their parents, when professionals seek to represent the good of the child and to understand and to join forces with parents at the same time. (See Alasuutari 2003.)

Partnership thinking has largely been adopted in the sphere of family work in the welfare state, particularly in preventive work and in encounters with what are termed normal families in the spirit of co-operation, guidance and counselling. It can, however, manifest itself as idealism functioning as a justification for not having to take a stand on difficult moral issue. Therefore, in child protective services, difficult custody disputes, anti-violence work and alcohol and drug treatment, for example, partnership thinking is always a difficult dilemma. “Intervening” in family lives cannot always be avoided, nor do families always conform to benevolent partnership.

The approach to the concern about families and family professionals’ work raised last, *governmentality analysis*, starts from a different perspective. Since societal control, according to state interventionism as well as liberalist and feminist critiques, is still easily perceived as control exerted over families’ and their members’ lives and as a questionable intervention into them, it is common for mix-ups to occur. Governing is a relatively neutral concept in the approach – it is a target of analysis, not a critical conclusion of the nature of the relationships. Modern society does not have one single centre from which it would be controlled; control takes place in miniature worlds of endless and intertwining bigger and smaller processes and conflicts. (See Rose 1999; Dean 1999; Helén 1997.)

Analysis of the mechanisms of governing looks above all at the ways in which people’s actions are affected without direct and coercive intervention: by guiding and by creating preconditions for the autonomy of individuals, families, communities, institutions and projects, for instance. Ways of influencing are not looked at by employing a top-down approach– from the state to citizens, professional to clients – but rather as horizontal and complex, continuously changing relationships. In the core of the contemplation lie questions about knowledge, about the shaping of involved parties and actors in activities themselves, about categorizations, reasons for concern, goals, practices and techniques. Questions about actors’ gender and other societal differences can be part of the analysis of all these.

Conclusions: what to do with the concern?

When we are concerned about something, we want to know how the situation can be solved. Researchers are involved in the processes problems are solved in the society and take part, sometimes very eagerly, in identifying the concern and in producing knowledge and formulating the solutions for it in the same arenas. The discussions presented above differ from each other in this sense. Partnership thinking and the women's alliance interpretation criticize family largely from an actor point of view. At the same time, they want to participate in taking care of the concern. According to the liberalist interpretation and critique of interventionism, problem-solving is a private matter; both underscore that family as a whole is an actor that suffers if its members' interests are seen as contradictory. Critique of family ideology considers the modern form of family itself, the idea of privacy concealing it and the culture supporting family thinking as harmful. The partnership interpretation, for its part, rather refrains from criticizing professionals' work or criticizes another matter – already outdated, hierarchical expertise.

The governmentality analysis considers knowledge concerning families, guidance provided for families and individuals as well as committing citizens to families to be the central ways in which modern society holds together. It is necessary for individuals, families and family professionals to have relative freedom in what they do, because this freedom provides foundations for newer and newer ways in which problems of a complex society can be solved. Interventions are not done primarily by setting limitations but by creating possibilities in the name of life and well-being. As soon as family professionals turn their concern and attention to new issues, their understanding of what is normal and what is different also changes. It is indeed characteristic of modern society that the circle of issues understood as problems expands and new conceptions of problems emerge – as well as also new suggestions for solutions. Especially the governmentality analysis refuses to participate in dealing with concerns in any other way but indirectly. By analysing the processes through which our knowledge of family and practices of family work have developed, it deals with history from today's perspective. Practices are not directly divided into good and bad, but instead, space is made for citizens' and professionals' ethical considerations as well as for new practices. In this way it opens up a window of change without presenting an

alternative model or a repair programme for problem-solving.

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Narrative form and narrative content¹

Matti Hyvärinen

If narrative is not to become just an artefact or text transmitting information about a culture, then it must be looked at as a strategic performance within specific and multileveled context that order embodiment, situation, and discourse. Family storytelling is an evolving expression of small group culture rather than a collection of stories. (Langellier and Peterson 2004, 39-40.)

If we think about normal, everyday storytelling, we can hardly name too many more recurrent themes than what family life, children, and childhood memories constitute. But families are not only *a theme*; they also are the primary *context* where children's storytelling capacities evolve, a context where *storytelling conventions* are formed, tested and violated. Families as local cultures and imagined communities are also *made real* and performed by storytelling. "On a daily basis, families 'get a life' by producing and consuming narratives about themselves. Put another way, a person gets a family (life) by daily performances of telling and listening to its stories", say Kristin Langellier and Eric Peterson (2004, 112). There could be, therefore, a good deal to do in the narrative study of families and childhood.

As regards the general magnitude of the topic, the work by the philosopher Daniel D. Hutto (2007, 2008) deserves to be mentioned. Hutto discusses the theory of folk psychology (according to which we routinely assume that other people have minds, desires, beliefs and reasons), and criticizes prevailing theories in cognitive science. Hutto argues against the dominant theory that we have an innate "theory of mind", and

¹ In spite of the singular forms used in the title, I do not share the old structuralist idea of a *singular* form of narrative. Hayden White's (1987) title *The Content of the Form* obviously refers to an assumed mandatory form of narrative. This is even more clear in the work of another philosopher of history, Louis Mink, who maintains that "while the structure of stories bodies forth a particular conceptual scheme necessary to any understanding of the story, there are also at a more general level conceptual presuppositions of *the very idea of narrative form itself*, and these supervene on its many varieties (Mink 1988, 186, italics MH). By the "very idea of narrative form itself", Mink refers to the Aristotelian model. White, as well, originally subscribed to this understanding of the narrative form (White 1987, 24). The 'form', in my use, refers to the 'how' of narrative expression, interaction and performance, and is understood to be irrefutably plural, and never a 'narrative form itself'.

says that we instead learn – in most cases – paradigmatic combinations of acting for good reasons in a particular situation simply by hearing fairytales and other stories at an early age. He thus maintains that human understanding of such concepts as “intention” and “reason for action” is learned by listening to narratives; and narratives therefore always have something to do with imputing and pondering of intentions behind anomalous action. Studies on how children learn to tell stories constitute a theoretically vital and interesting part of all narratives studies (Nelson 2003, 2004). Of course, the jury is still out discussing how the innate capacities and cultural forms finally interact creating the understanding of intentions and narratives, and the issue goes far beyond the limits of this article, but nevertheless, the study of early storytelling and reception of stories by small children sits in the middle of this discussion.

My title “Narrative form and narrative content” is meant to convey a methodological dilemma and even a hindrance in the social research on narrative. I have often heard such statements as: “I am not a linguist, thus I am not truly interested in the detailed forms of narration, and will instead focus on the narrative content.” Next, in this problematic scenario, these students take textbooks of so-called “content analysis” and claim to analyse, for example, the social *contents* of family narratives. In the worst case this simply means selecting statements of the text on thematic bases, and juxtaposing these excerpts in various a-temporal ways. In fact, this amounts to killing the narrative before analysing it, or, in other words, wiping out the narrative aspect of the material. I fully understand the sociological desire to discuss social aspects of family and childhood narration; however, I claim that the chosen way is often simply wrong, and based on a totally misleading assumption about the existence of a separate and straightforwardly accessible narrative content.

Another objection to the study of narrative forms is to maintain that the scholar is “genuinely interested in the real family life”, and not only in “the narratives about family”. This argument reduces family narratives straightforwardly as more or less reliable *representations*, mirrors, of family life and experiences (which, in this argumentation, are thought to be free from narrative constitution), and does not even touch the theme of narrative construction of the family life and childhood, and cannot study narratives as *performances*. Lars-Christer Hydén (forthcoming) has discussed narratives whose content is much less relevant than the performance of the narrative in a

certain context. *Alcoholics Anonymous* stories have just this type of strong formulaic and repetitive structure. When it comes to conversion stories, the core issue is primarily about whom, when, and in which context – and not so much about the content.

In the late 1970s, I was editing a journal of the *Socialist Student Union* (SOL). To strengthen the belief in forthcoming victories, we often published a column under the title “*Why did I join SOL?*” The reasons given were preferably drawn from the topical and contested issues of politics, ideology, or from the “worldwide victories of socialism”. The point was to give ammunition for propaganda, to be as orthodox as required, and not to give analytic representations of the realities behind the decision. When I interviewed former activists for my dissertation some 15 years later, the interviewees typically gave entirely different accounts about their joining the movement (Hyvärinen 1994). Nevertheless, it would not be helpful to discuss the difference between the accounts in terms of honesty, truthfulness and lying, but rather the aspects of performance and situation would need a keener analysis.

But where and how to start, if we indeed want to take the other pathway, and accept the relevance of the *narrative forms* for the study of the content? It is reasonable to think that the temporal axis of narrative must be recognized. Narratives are about some change, about some temporality, and without a connection to this change, any content statements remain outside of the narrative context. The *classical* reading of narrative instructs us to consider what Aristotle said about good tragedies: they always have a beginning, middle, and the end. Aristotle explicitly talks about complete sequences of action, and action that has an adequate extent and relevance to be imitated in a tragedy. So, is the beginning, middle and end the particular form we should be looking for? My first examples come from the probably best known Finnish family, that of the cartoon Viivi and Wagner by Jussi “Juba” Tuomola.

The first strip seems to be straightforward enough. We see Viivi walking at home, and finding something very sticky under her feet, something which forces her finally to stop walking altogether. The last frame portrays Wagner during one of his eternal eating sprees.

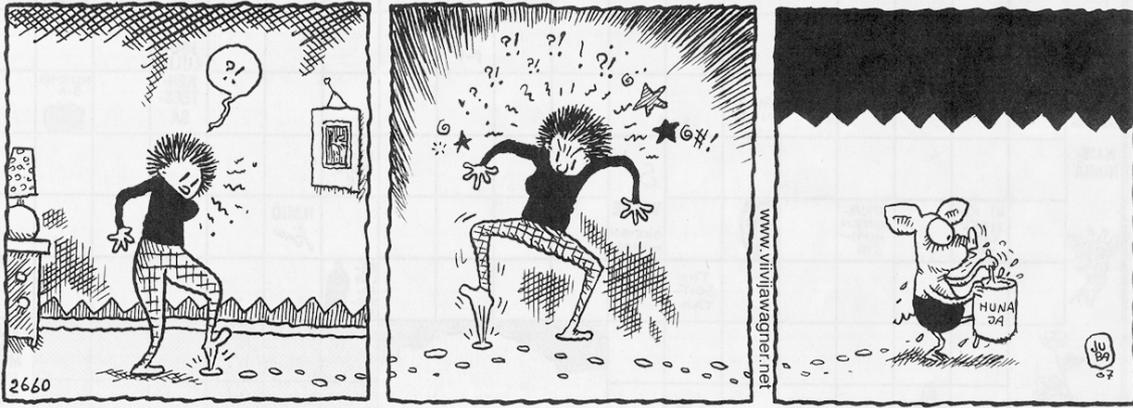


FIGURE 1: Viivi and Wagner © Juba Production Oy. We are grateful to the author for the permission to use the strip.

This time he is devouring honey and spilling it all over the carpet. We seem to have, so to say, the beginning, middle and the end. However, chronologically thinking, the spilling of honey must precede the first two frames; otherwise Viivi would have no problems at all with walking. In other words, the *order* of the frames and the *sequence of action* depart in a way which is problematic in terms of the Aristotelian model.

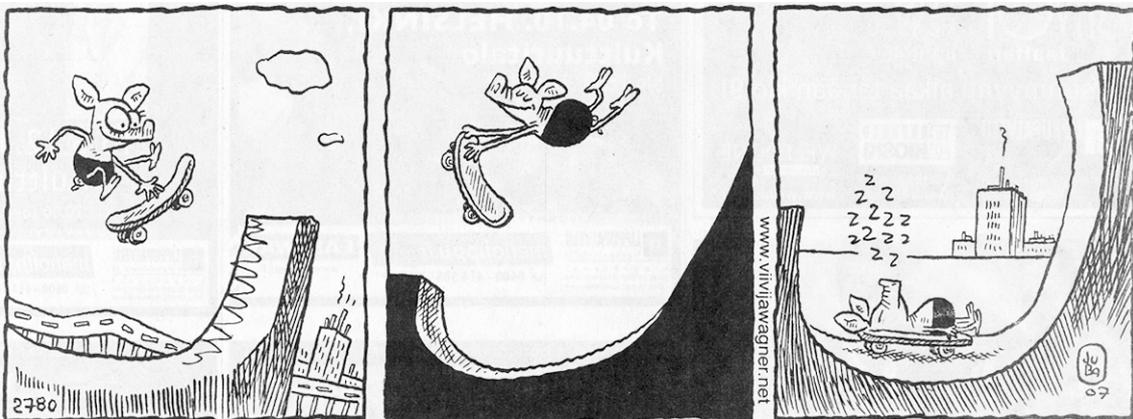


FIGURE 2: Viivi and Wagner © Juba Production Oy. We are grateful to the author for the permission to use the strip.

The second case seems again – at first – to be simple enough. Wagner is skateboarding in the first frame, in the second he is doing a masterful trick, and finally in the third he is asleep on his skateboard. But if you look closer at the absolutely fantastical nature of the second frame, you might come to an entirely different conclusion. This reading suggests that the single thing that actually takes place is that Wagner is sleeping and dreaming about his masterful acrobatics. On this reading, there are only two moments of time: Wagner dreaming the first frame, and Wagner dreaming the second frame.

Everything takes place in a dream, without obvious beginning, middle or end. In both cases, and departing from the Aristotelian symmetry of action and its representation, we can find the beginning, middle and end incontestably only on the level of narrative. The only thing we can do with the represented world of action is to speculate, make guesses and inferences based on the textual traces.

Story, story-world and narrative (discourse)

Partly in order to solve these kinds of analytic dilemmas, the literary narratologists developed the crucial conceptual distinction between *story* and *narrative discourse*; or in short story and narrative (Genette 1980; Abbott 2002). Not at all coincidentally, the narrative theorist David Herman (1999) suggests in his proposal for “socio-narratology” that this distinction is probably the most important element that social scientists could and should adopt from the literary study of narrative. ‘*Story*’, in this language, refers to the presumed ‘sequence of events’, that is, the ‘what’ or ‘content’ of narrative. Herman (2002) himself, in his later work, has replaced the term story (as a sequence of events) by a more extensive ‘story-world’, arguing thus that told narratives prompt us to imagine in our minds entire storyworlds with rich varieties of detail, not only Aristotelian sequences of events. The new concept is, so to say, more ecological than the linear sequence. ‘*Narrative discourse*’, or shortly ‘narrative’, instead refers to the *how* or *way* of narration, the order, mood, voice, distance, style, in which the events are accounted for in the narrative.

Above, we had the narrative discourse provided by Juba’s cartoons as our research material. But how and where resides the story or the content of these cartoons? The story is *not*, as a rule, available as such, and the only way to approach it is to study and question the narrative discourse and to make assumptions and inferences about the possible courses of events. For example, in the first cartoon there is no direct evidence, as such, telling us that Viivi and Wagner indeed are in the same apartment. We need to know their family history from previous cartoons, and to have knowledge about general narrative and media conventions (e.g. cultural and cognitive scripts) to understand that the separate frames most probably belong to one and the same story. At any rate, the most important conclusion is that whether we interview families, record naturally occurring narratives or collect them from newspapers or magazines, we always have

narrative discourse as our material, as our starting point, and we derive the stories only as a result of our interpretive work.

This Genettian approach challenges, in a way, the use of such directly story-world models as the famous Proppian model (Propp 1968, 1984), which originally grew out of a strictly empirical study on Russian wonder tales. The use of the model presumes that we can recognize, without too much difficulty, who of the “*dramatis personae*” of the story is the hero, villain, helper, and the princess, and similarly see without too much ambiguity the course of the “functions”, the mandatory events of the wonder tale. But there are no “surface level”, observable rules indicating which kinds of expressions, conceptualizations and sequences constitute someone, for example, as ‘a villain’. If I indeed tell a story about how I disagreed with my department head in the staff meeting, and tried in vain to convince her on necessary reforms and funds for a narrative project, do I immediately constitute her as a villain? To be more precise, there is no known zero hypothesis or limit case indicating that the model does not work at all in this material. That being the case, too much is left for the creative and innovative powers of the adept interpreter. From the perspective I have suggested, the problem with such content-oriented models is that they do not provide actual tools that help us to read *out* particular contents from narratives in particular contexts, and thus become models of reading pre-fixed thought models *into* the narratives.

Another way to express this conclusion is: you cannot approach the ‘what’ or ‘content’ of narrative except by way of analysing the ‘how’ or ‘form’ of narration. The shortcut approach to narrative content cannot but effectively obstruct the study of real narrative contents. The genuine problem in the study of narrative form is that it is not reducible to one method, one perspective or one concept. Instead of a single method, I suggest the use of a variable store of analytic concepts, drawing from narratology (e.g. focalization, voice, distance, genre), linguistics (e.g. register, verbal processes), and conversation and discourse analyses (e.g. performance). Jaber F. Gubrium and James A. Holstein (2009, 93–107) address interactional aspects of this dilemma by emphasizing the collaborative, interactional quality of narration. They point out that the “theme and content of a story cannot be divorced from its interactional development and the ongoing construction of meaningful contexts” (107). Gubrium and Holstein, in other words, emphasize the constitutive moment of *narration* and warn against approaches which simply study

separate stories in isolation. In a similar way, Del Hymes (1996, 200) pointed out that “By focusing on the what of narrative, and neglecting the how, implicit architecture as a way of shaping of meaning is missed”.

Indeed, if we are interested in the social aspects of narratives, something very vital has been kept out of the picture of story and narrative. Narratives neither exist in a timeless world, nor come out of nothing. In his now classic *Narrative Discourse*, Genette (1980) already introduced the third, decisive aspect of narrative language: *the narration*. The conceptual scheme, now adopted by Alun Munslow (2007), looks like this:

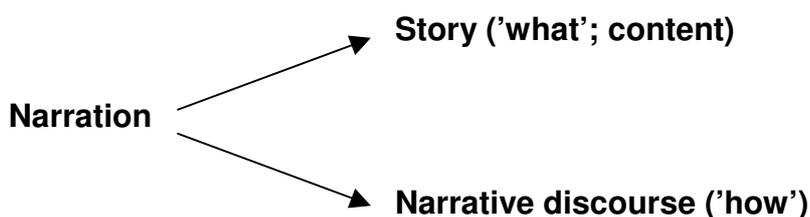


FIGURE 3: Gerard Genette’s (1980) three meanings of narrative

Content in Context

Munslow sees this model as being essentially temporal in the sense that there are no stories lurking around before the telling, which produces both narrative discourse and the story embedded in it. It is perfectly correct to think that we keep telling stories to ourselves, in our minds, but even that is not equal to maintaining that we would store context-free, finished narratives in our heads. Against all narrative totalization (e.g. Carr 1986), memories as such are not yet narratives. In social research, the study of narrative has recently moved towards the study of narration in conversational and institutional contexts. Lisa Capps and Elinore Ochs, for example, have studied the lively formation of narratives in a family context in their impressive book *Living Narrative* (2001). Jaber F. Gubrium and James A. Holstein (2009), in turn, have coined such concepts as “narrative environment”, “narrative collaboration” and “narrative practice” to emphasize the reality of narration in different – institutional and interactional – contexts. According to this evolving view, “it simply is not enough to analyze narratives as units of analysis for their structure and content, though it is a good starting point” (Bamberg 2004, 153). In the simple figure above, you may also see the three main

stages of social research of narrative (Hyvärinen 2008):

1. The first phase is characterized by the realist assumption that we can study the story and facts of life directly;
2. The second and structuralist phase emphasized the study of narratives as separate texts;
3. Whereas in the third phase narration and narratives are understood as parts of social convention and institutional-cum-narrative practices.

This rough scheme may help to clarify some unhappy formulations of early or sloppy social constructionism. To resist the direct representational arguments about the ‘reality’ of the first stage, many scholars claimed that they study life stories or illness narratives ‘only as texts’. This kind of Bakhtinian inner polemics also leads to making such claims as, for example, “I don’t study the actual life of unemployed people as such; I only study the narratives told by these people”. The problem with these statements is not so much in the criticism of the first stage; rather the problem is that they are still formulated so much in terms of the ‘realistic’ ontology of the first stage, which only gives narratives the role of mirroring the ‘true’ realities. Only after theorizing narratives as a *part of the constitution* of everyday life (of a family, a politician, a scholar) in different institutional settings, as well as of identities and many other elements of social life, the ambiguous argument of studying ‘only the texts/ narratives’ can be dismissed. Gubrium and Holstein (2009) have given their latest book the telling title *Analyzing Narrative Realities*. In short, the idea to study “just the texts” is no longer adequate.

Langellier and Peterson (2004, 39) explicate the aspect of performance in the case of family narration in a useful way. They say that from their

...human communication approach, we prefer the term *family storytelling* over family stories and other options such as family history, genealogy, and biography, for a number of reasons. First, family storytelling highlights the evaluative function of telling – the ‘so what?’ and ‘what matters?’ in the narrative performance event that makes sense of family and constructs the sensibilities of family. *Storytelling* as a term focuses on the making of meaningful stories to tell and retell rather than assuming significance. Second,

families do not routinely perform their genealogies, histories, and biographies in family events and interactions. The bits and pieces of family storytelling emerge within mundane activities of *doing family* – fragmentary, circumstantially, promiscuously, fleetingly, messily – often invisible to themselves as well to others. Third, family storytelling calls attention to the strategic communication practice that forms and performs family.

Once again, the move from separate narratives to storytelling in context is suggested, now in the context of family research.

Jerome Bruner's classic narrative study of the Goodhertz family outlined very strong family traditions of narration (Bruner 1987, 1990). In terms of Gubrium and Holstein, the family was an exceptionally effective narrative environment that had a strong impact on the stories told by every single member of the family. Quite surprisingly, at least I have not come across major studies comparing *different* families as narrative environments. One possible reason for that has been the phenomenologically oriented discussion about the "subjective meaning-making" in and by narratives. But it is again a colossal misunderstanding to believe that narrative, even life narrative, would be a pure and privileged site of self-expression and private, subjective meaning. As discussed above, we should rather understand narration and narratives as social and *cultural practices*; and to understand that our primary concern in social research is to locate the cultural and social conventions rather than the aspect of entirely subjective meaning-making.

Scripts and genres

My proposal for the study of narratives in a social context, and more exactly, my proposal for solving the eternal dilemma of form-and-content foreground the concept of *social convention* of narration. Much has been written recently on the interactional and collaborative processing of narratives (see, for example, Bamberg 1997, 2004; Brockmeier 2004; Langellier and Peterson 2004; Georgakopoulou 2007; Gubrium and Holstein 2009), yet much less has been said about the broader cultural conventions shaping narratives (contributors in Bamberg and Andrews 2004, however, discuss one aspect of them, master and counter narratives). Interactional and institutional contexts are parts of conventionality, yet they do not cover the whole field. In an

international media society, we definitely need new kinds of generic concepts. Note, for example, the following story told by Laurie McNeil (2004, 151):

The story goes that when Mr. McIntyre died, his wife called the local newspaper to place a death announcement. All she wished to say was, 'McIntyre died'. The newspaper agent said, 'Well, ma'm', we do have a five word minimum, so you can add three more words for the same price.' Mrs McIntyre thought for a minute, then replied, 'OK, put "McIntyre died. Boat for sale"'.

We are neither participants of the same immediate interaction nor a particular institution, and yet we are able to make a whole lot of inferences. First of all, most of the typical readers easily realize that this is generically a joke, and in particular a joke about Scottish stinginess. This inference is based on our lay knowledge about how to write a death announcement, or, on a more general level, how in general to react adequately to one's own spouse's death. To understand the joke as a joke thus means that we contrast our *expectations* with the text while reading it. More to the point: the fact that the story is indeed *tellable* at all is based on the fact that it does not simply recount the normal, the expected, or more specifically, *the cultural script* of writing a death announcement. Look at the story and try somehow to locate a content maintaining that death announcements *should* be deferential and non-commercial, yet this is exactly what the story suggests to us. William Labov and Joshua Waletzky (1967/1987) already noticed that both *tellability* and *evaluation* in oral narrative are largely based on comparison and contrast between what is expected and what actually happened. Herman (2002) further argues that narratives – in order to be understandable – need to employ such cultural scripts as their resources, but – in order to be tellable – necessarily need to depart from the scripts and cultural expectations.

The problem is that social scientists have not been too systematic in recognizing and charting the cultural conventions of narration. The categories are often hopelessly broad and vague, such as the 'progress story' (Gergen and Gergen 1986) or 'success story'. One strategy, introduced by the philosopher of history Hayden White (1973), was to categorize narratives as comedies, romances, tragedies or satires-cum-ironies. Such categories, for one thing, are all too broad and unspecified for the purposes of nuanced narrative analysis. For another thing, it is often difficult to argue textually about why this particular narrative, for example, is a comedy and not a romance. The final

problem is about how deeply narrative is an analysis that is resting only on this categorisation. One of the most widely read American narratologists, Gerald Prince (1987), for example, did not include such terms as ‘comedy’ and ‘romance’ in his *Dictionary of narratology* at all, arguing that they rather belong to stylistics than to narrative theory.

So, what can we do? My summary answer is: we should be more aware of cultural, regulative scripts and social, narrative genres. One informative study, in this regard, is Arthur W. Frank’s (1995) *The Wounded Storyteller*. When Frank categorised the illness narratives he studied, he was fully aware that there are many stories that escape his model, and that most actual stories anyway combine elements of all of these genres. Nevertheless, he suggests that there are three major genres of illness narrative: *the restitution narrative*, *the chaos narrative*, and *the quest narrative*. Frank documents how many health institutions stubbornly and one-sidedly sustain the restitution narrative, however limited the actual chances of restitution there may be in the particular illness. The quest narratives, in turn, may draw from the wide resources of self-enhancement and New Age literature. Both restitution and quest narratives may be characterized as ‘success’ stories, but the very success is understood to take place either without the shadow of the illness (restitution narratives) or indeed because of the revelatory impact of the illness (quest narratives). In the middle of a torturing illness, while experiencing the embodied chaos, a patient may equally hate both these optimistic versions, hardly being able to take the enough distance from the pain to see any narrative form at all.

The concept of ‘social genre’ was famously introduced by M. M. Bakhtin. He did not think of genres as simply linguistic or literary formations, but already thought that genres link social categories and styles; he indeed “argued that genres are not only formal but also *socio-historical* entities. They are ways of seeing and interpreting particular aspects of the world, strategies for conceptualizing reality. Genres have this function of representing changing conceptions of the world, thanks to their status as ‘transmission belts’ between social history and linguistic history” (Pyrhönen 2007, 121).

However, this general orientation and acknowledgement of the relevance of genres does not help much if social scientists working with narratives do not recognize genres at

all, or not at least systematically, and if they are short of any practical tools in telling genres apart. In what follows, I will discuss David Herman's (2002) *Story Logic*, and suggest that some of the tools he has found from cognitive theory and linguistics might help in recognizing and testing generic differences. Herman's own interests lay more on the literary side, and he himself does not offer a thick sociological reading of these tools. In working with generic differences throughout his book, he characteristically does not conceptualize genre differences from a categorical perspective, rather he suggests a very useful perspective of *preference structure*, an idea I will return to below. Herman argues, throughout his book, that the analytic language of the Labovian model of narrative (Labov 1972) is inadequate and does not yet enable a truly nuanced analysis of human experience and activity. In generic terms, it can be argued that the Labovian model privileges the genres of epic and adventure story in comparison with, for example, the psychological novel. In particular, the problems of the model reside in the vague and summary character of the categories 'action' and 'evaluation'. Does action always refer to material, physical action, and do mental and verbal moves always have the secondary character of evaluating something more concrete?

States, events and activities

Drawing from the work of philosopher Zeno Vendler (1967) and semantic linguist William Frawley (1992), Herman suggests the relevance of the concepts of states, events, processes (activities), accomplishments and achievements for a more detailed analysis of narratives. The truly informative point embedded in these distinctions is the varying temporary range of these concepts. Labov and Waletzky, in defining narrative, emphasized the necessity of at least one 'temporal juncture', that is, the necessity of at least two temporarily distinct clauses, such as in the example "He pulled the trigger and killed him", in contrast to 'he laughed and laughed'. This minimal condition is indeed useful in defining whether a (section of) text is narrative at all, but it may problematically privilege 'punctual' action (pull a trigger, open a door, close a book) in regard to longer processes (to suffer from a headache). Catherine Kohler Riessman (1990) recognized this narrowness in the Labovian model and suggested a new category of stories, 'habitual narrative', for accounts that rely on continuous processes and repetitive actions, not primarily only unique and punctual deeds.

Frank, in summarizing the restitution narrative, says that its plot follows the simple storyline “yesterday I was healthy, today I’m sick, but tomorrow I’ll be healthy again” (Frank 1995, 77). Strictly speaking, this is hardly a narrative in Labovian terms. The summary foregrounds three consecutive states, and the change from one state to another. The characteristic feature of states is that they can continue unspecified and different periods of time. To be human, male, young, in debt, asleep, having a fever – they all have entirely different temporal frames. What Herman suggests, for example, is that psychological novels generically privilege states in contrast to any punctual action, quite in contrast to the adventurous narratives outlined by Labov. Illness narratives may well be said to emphasize as well bodily and mental states instead of punctual actions.

But even verbal processes differ radically from each other in terms of the temporal range and punctuality. ‘I study narrative theory’ may be called a *process* or activity in Frawley’s language, and it does not explicate how long this process will continue. Instead, the example ‘Paavo Väyrynen read all the novels of Dostoyevsky in a week’ presents a more limited, already completed process with a definite temporal extent, and can be called *accomplishment*. While ‘I keep running’ portrays a process, ‘I ran a mile’ is already an accomplishment. ‘I broke my leg’ and ‘I closed the book’, instead, could be understood as *achievements* in Frawley’s language.

All these distinctions may seem at first to inspire useless exercises with semantic details. However, the whole point of these distinctions is to foreground the *different temporalities* that narratives use; and the different linguistic tools to express different aspects of acting and being in time. More to the point: it is quite obvious that different social genres privilege different temporal structures. After having surveyed anew my own materials from my dissertation, I have repeatedly faced the situation that some of the most problematic sections of life narratives are accounted for in the form of a kind of *stasis*, with the abundant use of expressions of states and enduring processes, and only after the decisive turn, with more punctual expressions. The Labovian model, with all its permanent merits in introducing the truly empirical analysis of oral narratives, seems after all to present a very particular version of narrative – I would rather refer to it as ‘anecdote’ for lack of a better term – as the general model of oral narration.

Processes, semantic roles and subject positions

Herman (1999) suggested the usefulness of the Greimasian actantial model as a way to connect narrative language and the world of action together, but Herman (2002) already moves towards a critique of the model. Now he searches for corresponding cognitive tools from the functional grammar of M.A.K. Halliday (Halliday and Matthiesson 1994). In contrast to the structuralist language theory, Halliday did not presume the existence of a complete language system. He rather thought that there are different communicative needs to which language tries to answer. Because of this orientation towards language use, Halliday has strongly inspired versions of linguistic discourse analysis.

Halliday suggests that, at least in the English language, the verbal processes can be divided into three different process types: *material*, *mental*, and *relational* processes. In addition to these basic types, there are the important subsidiary types of *verbal* (between mental and relational), *behavioural* (between material and mental) and *existential* (between material and relational) processes. This terminology seems to have at least two important merits: first it once again helps to open the semantic richness of verbal expressions instead of simply collapsing everything into the categories of action and evaluation. The biggest merit, however, seems to be the connection to the theory of *semantic roles*, which are based on the distinctions of verbal processes. The semantic roles, in turn, can be seen as an important intermediary step in the analysis of subject positions. But a few words about the processes for an introduction.

Material processes either move or transform the constitution of objects ('I kicked the wall'; 'Peter fetched the coffee from the kitchen'). *Mental* processes can be divided into *cognitive* ('I remember Mary'), *sensory* ('I see and hear Mary') and *affective* ('I love Mary') processes. When it comes to semantic roles and subject positions, this simple division of mental processes has very informative consequences, and apparently regulates the distance of the speaker to the text and its audience effectively.

Relational processes most typically outline the state of affairs ('The cat is hungry'; 'The cat is mine'; 'The cat has a long, long tail'; 'The cat is outside'). Again, it is interesting that while these processes are typical for official and formal documents, they as often appear in sections that account life historical problems, in outlining the static state of a

temporary impasse; emphasizing in a way that the more active material and mental processes have become more difficult, if not impossible. It is noteworthy that precisely these relational processes most directly inform of identifications and possible subject positions. Frank's summary of the restitution narrative above was also articulated through the use of relational processes, as states so typically are.

Verbal processes cover all kinds of exchange of semiotic signs ('He told me I'm stupid'; 'He signalled permission for the ship to go ahead'). In contrast to the Labovian model, verbal processes seem to enjoy more independence here – they can genuinely be the crux of the action itself. *Existential* processes, in particular in the Finnish language, remarkably resemble the relational processes. Nevertheless, the role is to introduce new existents ('There is a cat on the windowsill'; 'There is a global financial crisis'). In a very particular way, existential processes express and manipulate distance and closeness: to a more distant person we need to name and create the existents, whereas with a closer person one can already assume a common store of knowledge: 'The cat is on the windowsill'; or even 'Look, Jim's on the windowsill'. In showing an apartment to a potential buyer, you may say, in contrast: 'Look, there is a window'.

The orientation section of the Labovian model typically employs relational and existential processes. Anton Chekhov's 'A Boring Story' begins with an emphatic existential process: "There is in Russia an honored professor named Nikolai Stepanovich So-and-so..." (Chekhov 1889/2000, 55). Edith Wharton, instead, takes an entirely different tack in opening her *The House of Mirth*: "Selden paused in surprise" (Wharton 1905/2008). It almost equals saying that, of course, we all already know who Selden is. Because of the use of a material process of pausing, the opening is characteristically dynamic. Chekhov's opening words portray a very stable (although practically lost) state of affairs, and this story of old age, illness and loss works throughout with lasting processes, depictions of states, and repetition. Chekhov's narrator also wants to take distance from the name by this formal opening, and only in the end of the paragraph do we learn that the name belongs to the narrator himself.

Behavioural processes occupy the vital ground between mental and material, covering such expressions as coughing, sulking, shuddering, sleeping, crying, and laughing. In the Labovian frame, some of these processes are used as evaluative tools. Behavioural processes – used in self-narration – typically manipulate the distance between

the teller and his or her audience. Chekhov's narrator is a good example of this, in particular because of his general insistence on using intellectual discourse and almost stoic distance to his conundrum. This controlled flow of narration cracks during the episode on lecturing. Earlier on, he was a fluent and capable speaker; now he has this huge urge to start crying and shout at everyone that he will be dead in less than half a year. "In the midst of a lecture, tears suddenly *choke* me, my eyes begin to *itch*, and I feel a passionate, hysterical desire to *stretch* my arms out and complain loudly" (Chekhov 2000, 65-66, italics MH). If a teller takes the role of *behave*r, even for a moment, he or she comes much closer to the audience, and takes a remarkably vulnerable position. Relational processes, of course, can and do *describe* bodies but from a variable distance; behavioural processes present the body as expressive itself.

As I mentioned, Halliday and Matthiesson proceed from processes to a model of *semantic roles*. For the purpose of keeping this article readable and within some limits, I provide only a shortened version of the model, outlining only the roles I have understood to be the most relevant. As for example Paul Ricoeur has often repeated the Aristotelian concepts of acting and suffering as vital parts of narrative semantics (Ricoeur 1984, 44, 60), Halliday helps us to see a whole gamut of degrees of agency and 'patiency'. I draw most of my examples from the historical discussion about the role of Finland in the Second World War from the summer of 1941, during the Continuation War, in order to illustrate the significance of these distinctions.

At first Halliday suggests a division between 'logical actors' and 'logical recipients'. *Agent* corresponds to the strongest form of agency, the instance that originates and wants the action. ('Finland joined the war alongside Germany'). *Author*, instead, is the subject only in terms of traditional grammar, it executes the action but without volition ('Finland drifted into the war alongside Germany'); while *instrument* is only a tool in operations conducted by others ('Germany used Finland as its stooge in its campaign against the Soviet Union').

The side of 'logical recipients' has the same gradation. *Patient* is the object of the action, having no initiative or volition behind the realized action ('The war between the great powers caused Finland to lose large parts of its territory and to suffer from tens of thousands of casualties'). *Benefactor* is a kind of third party between agent and patient, acquiring some of the results of the action ('The war between Germany

and the Soviet Union provided a large number of orders to Swedish industry'). The role of *experiencer* is particularly informative because of its variation between cognition (reflector), affect (affective experiencer) and sensing (observer/senser). 'We remember Russia in everything we do' (reflector) informs us of an entirely different subject position than 'We hate Russia and that affects everything we do' (affective experiencer); or even 'We see very well what Russia is up to' (observer). But senses are not quite equal in terms of distance. While seeing almost constitutes a reflecting and often distant position, how is it with hearing, smelling, or tasting? 'We hear well what Russia is up to' is still very close to seeing it; but 'We can smell what Russia is up to' adds an entirely new aspect; not even to suggest the almost bodily experience of 'We can taste every day what Russia is doing'.

The subsidiary processes, of course, suggest the important roles of *behave*r and *sayer*, for example, which again are located between strong agency and strong patiency, although it is easy to see how the role of *sayer* can easily be affiliated with agency, and the role of *behave*r with the role of recipient.

But to return to the issue of self-narration, it is clear that the different roles of experiencer regulate effectively the aspects of vulnerability, control and distance in self-positioning. By following Herman's original idea of preference structures, we could investigate the construction of subject positions as a combinatory work with preferences. As an intuitive example and thought experiment, without any claims about systematic analysis of data, we might find the different preference structures of a i) political leader; ii) a recovering depression patient. The preference structures *might* be as follows:

Political leader: agent > reflector > observer > *sayer* > patient

Depression patient: affective experiencer > *behave*r > patient > reflector > *sayer* > agent

To clarify the intention behind my discussion on semantic roles, I emphasize that I am not suggesting a systematic analysis of all verbal processes in social research. For one thing, a reliable analysis would require a rather long practice and most likely the help of competent linguists. I meet with ambiguities and difficulties with this scheme all the time. For another thing, I more or less think about analysing the key sections of narratives and storytelling more closely with the help of these distinctions. The

third thing is that I consider the biggest merit of this tool as being its heuristic feature, because it suggests useful ways of seeing narrative materials in a more detailed and complex manner. Fourthly, let me just note that Herman (2002) suggested these semantic roles, rather than pre-fixed ‘actantial roles’, as the best way of connecting the *world of action* and the *world of narration* conceptually. In contrast to the original Proppian scheme, for example, this theory connects *actual* language use and the suggested roles, and does not impose pre-existing actantial roles deductively on all possible storytelling occasions. Finally and emphatically: I do not see this as the Grand Method of Narrative but rather as a helpful tool in narrowing the gap between narrative texts and their interpretations.

Narratives as performance and comment

This article has advocated the move from representational reading of separate narratives towards performative reading of narratives and storytelling in context. All this complicates straightforward content analysis. As a helpful theoretical move, Langellier and Peterson (2004) even suggest a concept of content-ordering, maintaining that, in family storytelling, the contents of the family story are constantly ordered and performed interactionally. A similar content-ordering is, of course, going on in every interview situation.

The folk psychology thesis (e.g. Bruner 1990; Hutto 2007, 2008) suggests that adult people do not tell ordinary, script-like courses of events – even though children begin storytelling by telling first just the most normal sequences (Nelson 2003, 2004). Instead, it is only when essential beliefs in a folk psychology are violated that narratives are constructed, argues Bruner. This means that narratives, however sincere and truthful the narrator is, are always *comments* and reactions to the deviations from the scripted courses of events. Narratives have a mission, and thus their evaluative function overrides their representational role. To proceed to the narrative content, then, we need to consider the performative, commentary role of narratives, see how the contents are ordered interactionally, and to see in which kinds of forms the narration is produced. In other words, we need narrative analysis without a shortcut to content.

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Studying the ‘ordinary’ families’ narratives on the support they want

Marju Selg & Elin Tuuling

Introduction

In this paper we discuss the interview study the aim of which was to learn how families describe their everyday life and the need in help and support. The study was completed during the applied project “Elaboration of Child and Family Assessment Guide”¹. By studying the ‘ordinary’ families we intend to create a basis for deeper understanding the ‘troublesome’ families’ situation and their way of talking about difficulties and needs. We analyze here the experiences we got while studying the Estonian ‘ordinary’ families’ and discuss the peculiarities of interviewing the families with different socioeconomic status. The outcomes of the study give us useful information for elaboration and implementation the method of assessment interview for ‘client’ families.

In the article, first, we describe the context of the study and introduce our intentions. Then we discuss the research process and some findings that would be essential for planning the next stage of the research project. Finally, we resume the ideas that emerged during the interviews, and draw conclusions for the following research questions.

Our considerations when planning the study

There are lot of books and articles in international literature that offer introductions, guidelines and research findings of child and family assessment in social work (Hartman & Laird 1983, Holland 2004, etc). However, while social work is highly connected with the political, social and economical context, the foreign countries’ knowledge cannot be taken over directly. We should elaborate our own system of assessment that fits to Estonian circumstances.

¹ Estonian Ministry of Social Affairs, contract 9.6-4/1868.

In Estonia, only few students' thesis projects on family assessment interviews in social work purposes (Nõmm 2005; Tuuling 2007) have been completed. In the frame of an interview research Strömpl and Selg studied the experiences of social workers when they met troublesome families (Strömpl & Selg 2004; Selg 2007a). These studies show that the interviewers' experiences vary according to the purpose of the interview. When researcher asks questions about particulars of family life for a research project then family members are mostly open and cooperative in every way. This is valid for both 'ordinary' and 'problematic' families irrespective of their client status. However, when social worker visits a family during a 'child protection case' she meets opposition and resistance. It is obvious that the purposes of scientific and social work assessment interviews are different. It seems that social workers have to learn from the research interview.

To understand the above problems we should take into consideration the family discourses in Estonian social work. The following topics seem to be relevant here: first, the dual point of view to family; second, understanding the role of mother and father in child care and in other family duties; third, understanding the concept of network(ing) in child protection and family work, fourth, the child protection workers' desire to know the 'truth' about family situation; and finally, the fatalist view of families' nature and coping prevalent in child protection workers. Let us specify these themes.

In Estonian child protection professional talk and literature, the dichotomous discourse of family is quite common. On the one side, Estonian practitioners appreciate family as sacred and secure. They tend to compare families to a normative model, which means that a 'proper' family should be complete, strong and caring. But the families that fail to cope with their responsibilities lose their familiar merit. These families are treated otherwise; they turn to clients, lose their privacy and will be open to interventions. (Strömpl & Selg 2002) Intervention tends to be understood as the last step which is allowed when the situation is really dangerous for children and the family is not any more a 'proper' one. While these views appear in professional literature (Rääk 2003; Korp & Rääk 2004) and in interviews with practitioners (see above), one can speculate that child protection workers proceed from this stereotyped view of family. It is clear that the workers' biased attitude leads to the clients' distrust or hostility, and the worker fails to create partnership for improvement of her/his life (Hartman & Laird 1983). Such

course of events, in its turn, deepens the practitioners' dual attitude to families. This attitude seems to be actually a great barrier in doing a good child and family work, and we try to break it.

Second, 'family' is used as synonym of 'mother' in the child protection discourse. By analyzing the Estonian child protection handbooks, Jane Ivanova found that according to these texts, good child care depends only on mother, and mother is responsible when something is wrong with 'her' children and family. Father is depicted as dangerous, or he is absent at all (Ivanova 2007). Therefore, we try to learn how family members themselves describe the familiar roles and the mother's and father's everyday duties.

Third, the concept of network(ing), rather its interpretation in the Estonian child protection discourse is highly relevant to the study of families' descriptions of the support they want. It is important to know that in the Estonian child protection handbooks (Rääk 2003; Korp & Rääk 2004), 'networking' is interpreted as cooperation between professionals and agencies. It is described like a method for giving support to practitioners and for controlling clients. Building and empowerment of the child's and family's own supportive network of friends and relatives is considered as an incidental topic in Estonian professional texts and talk (Selg 2007b). According to family discourse in social work, the families who have lost their familiar merit, and thus turned to targets of intervention, are treated as cut off entities without any meaningful relations with other people. We intend to challenge this approach. For that purpose, we start with learning how Estonian 'ordinary' families see the role of informal networks in their well-being. Knowing the coping families' views gives the basis for examination of troublesome families' experiences of informal support.

Fourth, Estonian practitioners hold the fatalist view of families' nature and coping. By this view, causes of family problems lie in families' inevitable merit and fortune. One can not improve anything, when family does not want it. So, both families and helpers are turned just to victims of fortune. We post the question here how families themselves do understand their own agency and role of fate.

Finally, when visiting homes and discussing the everyday life with family members, practitioners are not accustomed to make a difference between 'facts' and interpretations. When clients' talk does not match with 'factual picture' or the

practitioners' pre-existing knowledge and expectations of clients' situation then it tends to be qualified as telling lies, manipulation or 'learned helplessness'. In our research project we take the emic perspective and focus clearly on families' experiences, interpretations and views. We try to see the families' everyday life and the interview situation through the eyes of family members.

Bearing in mind the considerations discussed above, we designed the qualitative semistructured interview scheme that modeled the family assessment interview. Main themes were as follows: family membership (construction a genogram); way of living: everyday activities at home, work and school, transportation, finances etc; relationships, joint actions, hobbies, recreation; food and health; housing; successes, disadvantages, and need for help.

The interviews were performed by Elin Tuuling in spring of 2007. She met ten families in their own homes. All the families of different composition but having young children belong to the 'ordinary' and 'coping' ones, which means they cope without need in any social assistance. In these meetings parent(s) and in some cases child(ren) took part. During the interviews, Elin encouraged creation of narratives within the given topics. Elin transcribed the recording of interview and we together analyzed the data and discussed the interview process.

In this stage of research project we focused on 'ordinary' families. In the next stage we intend to lean more profoundly the process and content of family interviews by different conditions: goal of interview, socioeconomic status and composition of families, etc.

Lessons learned during the research process

In this section we discuss our experiences got from preparing for interviews and conducting them. It was quite hard to find families for the study. We were aware that we should avoid interviewing the familiar families because it is not appropriate to be a friend and a researcher simultaneously. Unfortunately, we met difficulties to find unfamiliar families. Therefore, the respondent families were found in and through acquaintances. We understand that one can ask whether the interviewer's friends and friends' friends are sufficiently familiar to get a good contact and unfamiliar enough for objectivity. There are several strategies for finding respondents for qualitative research,

and to engage the clients of social welfare institutions is a guaranteed way to succeed, but it causes some ethical questions about voluntariness of participation, and does not work by studying 'ordinary' families. When planning interviews with 'problem' families, one should realize that participation of such families in the project is always involuntary to some extent.

The interview setting is another important issue for the researcher. The interviews were carried out in respondent families' homes. That means the settings were unfamiliar for the interviewer but familiar to family members, so their relationship was unbalanced. The interviewed parents showed hospitality but interviewer felt some obligation to her hosts. The interview situation is pleasing but one can realize just after the interview that she or he as incomer had violated the family's privacy. There is a risk of getting overwhelmed with information when conducting interviews at homes. The interviewer should at a time observe the setting and what happens, and concentrate on conducting the interview. This challenge is far more relevant to social work assessment interview.

The concept of 'social support' has double meaning for the interviews. On the one side, getting and giving support was one question in the interviews. On the other side, we experienced that the families expected and actually got social support during the very process of research interview. Every interview situation includes encounters with the other people's views and values. The qualitative researcher's aim is to learn and accept the understandings and values of interviewees. The families who offer openhearted stories wait for feedback, they want to see that the interviewer has understood and accepted their views and explanations. It was not very hard for Elin because she and her respondents belong to approximately the same circle. We learned that the acquaintance with respondents is positive because it facilitates the active and open interview. However, it is possible that everything the interviewees say seems too familiar and one feels it difficult to find the ideas for asking about hidden areas of respondents' life. In case of interviewing the 'client' families, one must be on the alert to recognize the continuous risk of being preconceived and knowing the truth without actually asking and listening the family members.

Concerning family interviews, the question arises who is the actual respondent. The husbands and wives, and children in some cases, told about their personal experiences in family life and these stories joined to construct the family story. In this way a

great agreement appears on discussed topics between family members. All family members supported the shared story. In this study, our aim was not to compare the family members' opinion. Nevertheless, one may ask what would be different when interviewing the family members separately. Is interviewing family members separately a family interview? The famous family researchers and theorists Morgan (1996) and Gubrium and Holstein (1990) have argued that the 'familiar' topic is more important than actual presence of family in the interview.

Some findings

All families in our study expressed the ethos of coping. Their narratives of the family life can be classified as coping stories. One can even say that this genre is more than coping story. These stories are like 'heroic sagas' that contain a series of progressive-regressive phases (Gergen 1997). The following line appears in family stories: "Life is hard and we have to cope. There are many problems and difficulties in our life but we manage with them! One must have the trusty friends and relatives for coping well and we have them. We pride ourselves for coping with problems. Despite hardness, the family life gives us much pleasure. An essential part of the coping is that it is done by our family."

Informal networks appear as important topic in family coping narratives. The family coping stories focus strongly on togetherness: "We succeed together. We have strong supportive network that we together build and preserve. Every good family has a strong network of friends and relatives. The network helps us and we help our network members." When we analyse these stories, we see some inconsistency. One must take care of mutuality of help: "We are afraid we don't get help if we don't help others", but nevertheless everybody wants "sincere help without any preconditions". This false contradiction clearly demonstrates the importance of informal supporting networks for families. We point out here that the concept of informal networks is essential in social work but unfairly neglected in Estonian literature and practice.

The attitude to getting specialized help from public agencies is different. Asking for help from public agencies demonstrates weakness of family. This is not a topic to discuss with outside people. Constructions like "Family doctor does not help, its her job" appear in interviews. The stories made it evident that ideal help and support

just emerges without any appeal, and is sincere and unconditioned. An example of this is speech therapist in school or kindergarten who arrives to the child herself. However, families complained about missing the information on public help. The last train of thought shows once more that dignity of every family is strongly tied to privacy, autonomy and self-determination. Mutual help in intimate networks is accepted and valued but using the public help damages merit of family.

Conclusions

Most qualitative researchers meet 'problem' families in situations where they are due to their weakness or problems, and focus on these topics. We studied 'ordinary' families asking about their everyday life, and our intention was to study their stories of coping with difficulties. It is important that both 'ordinary' and 'problem' families talk about difficulties and coping, and that both difficulties and coping are essential to family.

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Using photographs as a data collection method in family research

Hille Janhonen-Abruquah & Gunilla Holm

Previous research has used photographs in various ways ranging from illustrations to photo elicitation interviews. In addition photographs have been used as an instrument in research working for social change. Common for all these approaches is that they have all tried to make visible something that is not easily seen and where words seem not to be enough. In the study discussed in this article, photographic diaries were used in combination with other methods in order to capture the passing moments of everyday life. Everyday life is difficult to research as it is habitual, ordinary and mundane. Everyday life is something that remains and continues even when everything else is changing in family life. As the photographic diary added a visual element to the data it also brought new challenges to the data analysis.

This article focuses on how photography can be used as a data collection method in family research. The main research interest in the study lied in how daily routines were constructed and undertaken as the members of family interacted across national borders and between continents. The research was carried out amongst immigrant women (n = 19) who were currently living in Finland. Data were obtained from photographic diaries, focused recall discussions combined with questionnaires and participant observations.

From illustrations to social change

Photographs in research can have different functions. Photographs can *illustrate* the research findings as done in, for example, an anthropological study conducted on public transportation in Antwerp. The photographer joined the researcher at times for the field work. The research findings were then illustrated by some of the photographs (Soenen 2003). Photographs thus clarified and emphasized the research findings.

Photographs can also make it easier for the researcher *to become familiar with the*

research context. Gold (2004) has used photographs to build trust with the respondents as reported in his research among ethnic and minority communities. It is possible via the photographs to get a sense of how the participants see their world. Photographs force one to *see the world through someone else's eyes*, as for example in a study where Scandinavian children took pictures of their daily food and eating practices (Johansson & al. 2006). The children were happy to use disposable cameras and were eager to see their own pictures as well as others' and discuss them. In this particular study the researchers were not always satisfied about the technical picture quality. They saw it as a weakness of the study. In this case the children gave the researchers a sense of how they saw their foods and eating habits without adult censorship.

Gold (2004) has benefited from the social interaction involved with taking the pictures, showing the images to respondents and *sharing* prints with colleagues and students. Gold found that the taking of pictures and sharing them helped him build social relationships with the participants. Pictures allowed him also to share the research findings with colleagues. Holm (in press) has developed this social interaction even further as her research participants, graduate students, also participated in the analysis of the pictures they had taken. In her study the making and presenting of the photographs allowed the students to construct and perform visually their identities as doctoral students.

Pictures can be stronger than words and provide more information claims Power (2003). She sees the downfall of still pictures as that they can not capture the dynamic aspect of actions. She also argues that since daily and routine activities can be difficult to discuss, using photographs can help generate conversation and stimulate discussions. *Photo elicitation* (Harper 2002) is based on the simple idea of inserting a photograph into research interview. The photographs evoke information, feelings and memories that might not have emerged in the interviews without the photos.

Family *albums* enable both the researcher and research participants to visit history. It gives an opportunity to revisit different moments in the research participant's life span and capture meanings attached to visual representations (Twine 2006). In Twine's longitudinal ethnography the photographs chronicled the life of one family over twenty years of time. She was interested in how white birth mothers of African –descent children negotiate their “racial profiles” in public and private arenas. Twine paid

attention to both what was in the pictures and what was not seen. Another kind of family album was photographed by two sisters who both were professional photographers living in 1920's in Rovaniemi in northern Finland (Autti 2003). Autti analyzed the pictures from a women studies point of view with regard to how the sisters were seen and how they saw themselves. The photographs portray an active, even cosmopolitan picture of the sisters in the twenties which is totally different than what has remained to these days of the remote areas of Northern Finland. These pictures transmit powerful representations from the past to the present day.

Photographs can be seen as tools to display a family, argues Finch (2007). She claims that families can not exist solely in one's own consciousness. They need to be understood and accepted as such by others (Finch 2007). Important tools for displaying families are physical objects like photographs and domestic artifacts which don't necessarily carry much monetary value but which symbolize the relationship. Finch thus argues that families are not only made ("doing family") but also displayed.

Finch was pointing to the importance of photographs in family stories but they are also powerful tools and agents that can build self esteem or even generate social change. The Loveliest Girl in the World (<http://www.voimauttavavalokuva.net/>) is an *empowering* project carried out by the photographer and social worker Miina Savolainen. She worked over a decade with girls from a foster home. The fairytale quality of the photographs reveals a truth often obscured by the rough and tumble of daily life, namely the person each young girl feels she really is inside herself. It allows the girls to regard themselves as strong and undamaged people. These photographs are deeply authentic, revealing the universal desire to be seen as good and valuable.

Photovoice (<http://www.photovoice.com/background/index.html>) is a method that aims to generate social change. It is a combination of a grass roots approach, photography and social action. It helps people to record their community's strengths and weaknesses; it enhances dialogue and involves policy makers. A recent Finnish example of photovoice is the "Tulppaanitalo" project where this approach was used to record and view the everyday life experienced by parents who are disabled themselves (http://www.kvtl.fi/sivu/enemman_otetta_photovoice_projektissamme). Disabled parents experienced that society sees them as helpless and incapable of raising children. Photovoice gave them a possibility to share their everyday life experiences with

others and thereby accomplish a change in other people's perceptions of them.

Common for all these various uses of photographs in research is that they try to make visible something that is not easily seen or noticed. Pictures are used when words are not enough. The increased use of photographs in research might also be because the world is becoming more visual than before. In addition thanks to advancing technology, photography does not require professional skills and is also inexpensive to use as a data collection method.

How to get hold of everyday life

Everyday life (Lefebvre 1984; Felski 1999-2000) and its passing moments are not the easiest ones to capture for scientific purposes. The previous research has succeeded to capture important aspects of daily life by using different research approaches and methods. Researchers have immersed themselves into the life of target groups and thus got an insider's view as done, for example, in the study of Honduran families living in Massachusetts (Schmalzbauer 2004) or Somali women living in Finland (Tiilikainen 2004). A longitudinal interview done with structured questionnaires described changes over the first decade of South Asian refugees' resettlement in Canada (Beiser, Johnson & Roshi 1994).

A diary is able to provide detail written information if participants are motivated to write. Open diaries with some guideline questions gave detailed and accurate information about the type of daily activities as well as the duration of the activities amongst Swedish families (Ellegård & Wihlborg 2001). In a Finnish study video camera recordings were able to capture the dynamics of family life (Korvela 2003). The cameras were placed by the researcher but operated by the families themselves. Two to three cameras captured the daily events. Families were instructed to switch on the cameras while they were at home. The video recordings were complemented by interviews with the mothers (Korvela 2003). In-depth interviews assisted by picture drawings have also been used to capture the everyday life (Jokinen 2005).

Developing photography as a data collection method for family research

The target group of this study - immigrant women living in Finland – demanded that the

research methods be developed further. They were not a homogeneous cultural or ethnic group. The researcher and the participants did not share a common mother tongue, which needed to be taken into account. The study required a method that could bridge the language barriers. The women were not eager to write much partially due to poor literacy skills and with some of them in-depth interviews would not have succeeded due to their poor English and Finnish skills.

Photographic diaries turned out to be a friendly way for research participants to express themselves. In the beginning disposable cameras were used and later digital cameras were found to be more practical. The researcher met the research participants at least three times. At the first meeting the idea of the study was presented. In the second meeting the research agreement was signed, the background questionnaire was filled out and technical assistance on how to operate the cameras was provided. In the research agreement it was agreed that the researcher got the right to use the pictures for research purposes, but they would not be published. This was important as the idea was to get pictures of everyday life not of how the women wanted their daily life presented in a scientific publication. During the third meeting the pictures were viewed together by the researcher and the participant who had taken the photographs. Some of the research participants met over ten times with the researcher when she did volunteer work at one of the NGO's frequented by the research participants. All the discussions were recorded. During these recall discussions stimulated by the photographs it was important not ask much but to listen intensively and in a sensitive manner. The idea was to allow the photographs to stimulate the discussion not researcher's questions. Meeting places and times were agreed through mobile phone calls or text messages. Meetings took place in schools, classrooms, corridors, NGO offices and cafeterias. One of the disposable cameras was lost, one participant's pictures were developed but she was unavailable for an interview and on one occasion the digital camera was returned but the pictures deleted. Otherwise there were no other problems with the data collection. Clear instructions were needed to guide what kind of moments should be photographed. In the beginning it was also challenging to get pictures of daily life and not tourist pictures. In the end this was not a problem as the pictures were clearly the ones no one would put into their family album or send to relatives overseas.

The background questionnaire was long and filling it out was difficult and time

consuming. There were also language difficulties in that some of the participants did not understand Finnish or English very well. The researcher used a paper copy of the questionnaire during the interview and later transferred the data into an electronic database.

Strip cartoons from everyday life

The research method provided three types of data. The photographic diaries constructed by the 19 immigrant women living at that moment in Finland produced 459 photographs. Stimulated recall discussions based on the pictures were recorded and transcribed. Background questionnaires were completed together with research participants. Participant observation notes from six sites, three NGO's and three formal schools providing courses for immigrants, provided a description of the contexts.

In this kind of three-method study each method produced a different kind of information. Photographs and stimulated recall discussion provided insight into the daily activities. The aim was to get a picture of respondent's normal, daily life. The researcher's interest lied mostly in the activities. What were their daily routines, habits and activities? In the beginning the idea was to use only the transcribed text as data and not to pay so much attention to the pictures that elicit the words. But soon it was noticed that the pictures themselves contained a lot of interesting information. The images and the words did not tell a different story, but complemented each others the same way as in strip cartoons. For the analysis the pictures and the text are inseparable. Although the pictures generated a lot of discussion the speech was not always directly connected to the image.

The detailed questionnaire - 37 questions about countries lived in, languages spoken, occupation, family ties, social relations etc. - provided demographic data about the women themselves. The questionnaire tried to categorize the immigrant women although categorizing is quite controversial. Instead many researchers, like Vertovec (2006), are using the concept of super diversity as it is more and more difficult to classify people according to their nationality, ethnicity, and religion. One common thing all the participants shared, besides the fact that they all were women, was that they were defined as immigrants as they attended courses targeted for immigrants or have found

their way to a place that provided services for immigrants.

Participant observations attached the study into a certain space, context and environment. It described the location and atmosphere by providing an overview of the various settings where data was gathered and provided background information for the data gathering. Both the questionnaire and the participant observation provided background information that helps in understanding the photographs better.

Conclusions

What kind of truth does the photography method described above provide? The question arises whether the results illustrated a true picture of women's everyday life or only recorded random incidents of everyday life? Pictures taken by the research participants themselves provide a presentation of themselves. But do the pictures portray how the women see their reality or how they want to display it for others?

This research method was enthusiastically received by research participants and also the researcher was delighted to get multifaceted, rich data. The strengths of using photography as a data collection method were clear. First, it was able to capture obvious, self-evident moments of daily life. Second, it eased the communication challenges by lowering the language barriers and thus avoiding at least some of the misunderstandings. Photographs generated easy flowing conversations even when the researcher and research participant did not share a long history together. Though, clear instructions were needed to specify what kind of pictures the women were supposed to take. Analyzing the pictures brought new challenges to the research. It is challenging to analyze both text and pictures simultaneously. Using photographs raised some new questions. They open an additional avenue into research participants' lives, but through whose eyes do we see? Do we see what the participants intended or do we see mostly our own interpretations of their daily lives?

If photographs are added to the research report there are some ethical aspects to be considered. First of all permission from the research participant is definitely needed. Interpretation of pictures needs careful consideration as well. Would the publication of these kinds of pictures strengthen the cultural stereotypes and would this be an academic way of peeping into someone's private life? Maybe one option to present the

research findings would be to use the photographs as illustrations. Hence using, not the research data pictures, but pictures taken especially for the illustration purpose of the research report.

What new did this research method bring to family research? It is an ethical way entering a private family life in the sense that the researcher sees what the research participants want to show. Creative use of photographs – photovoice and its applications – could open new approaches for various immigrants’ domiciling projects, different interventions and family support.

This study confirms earlier research which has shown that photographs are more than just a technical method. Photographs evoke information, feelings and memories. They clarify and emphasize the research findings and transfer powerful representations from the past to the present day. As photographs have even the power to contribute to social change more attention in the future needs to be paid to visual research methods.

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Doing research on Families with parents abroad¹: the search for theoretical background and research methods

Irena Juozeliuniene

Introduction

In the recent years, ever growing interest in emigrants' families within the public discourse turns into "panicking about the consequences of emigration". Even a few years ago, short-term economic emigration was not deemed to be dangerous. It was perceived as a solution for reducing unemployment, increasing one's income, acquiring useful experience abroad. Following Lithuania's accession to the EU in May, 2004, the society is facing up to the "negative" consequences of free movement of labor.

New phenomena are encountered – one or both parents depart abroad, while their children live in Lithuania alone, looked after by relatives, state institutions. Migration of family members in itself is not a new phenomenon, yet the extent of this trend poses a challenge to family institution.²

Families with parents abroad (FPAs) and children with parents abroad (CPAs) are already being singled out as distinct social group. The tendency is observed to link parents' departures to work abroad with exclusively negative effects – children's suicides, teenager's delinquent behavior. Similarly, it is unjustified to juxtapose FPAs and "broken homes" and use these terms interchangeably. Often times, emigrants'

¹ The object of families with parents abroad is a group of individuals, where parent(s) – child(-en) live in different households in different countries. These individuals perceive themselves to be a family and are considered to be a family by immediate social surrounding. The terms "family with parents abroad" (FPA) and "children with parents abroad" (CPA) were worked out by the author in cooperation with the members of the NFRN in 2004. These terms do not carry stigmatizing connotation. Lithuanian terms were suggested in 2006.

² Official statistics speaks of emigration on a grand scale. During the last sixteen years, a total of 334 thousand people have emigrated. In 2005, the biggest share of Lithuanian emigrated to the United Kingdom, Ireland, USA, Germany, Russian Federation, Spain. From a perspective of family issues, the issue that attracts concerns is that in 2005, 43.5% of emigrants aged 18 and older were married individuals. During 2001-2005, full 82.1% of all people who have not declared their departure abroad were individuals aged 15-45 (among them: 55.9% aged 25-45) that is people likely to have children (International Migration of Lithuanian Residents, 2006). No exact data on the number of parents who went to work abroad with their children staying in Lithuania is available. Basing on different sources it is proposed that in 2007 there were around 20.000 children with parents abroad in Lithuania under the guardianship or without it.

families are referred to as “separated” families, while children as “nobody’s children”, “abandoned”, “not needed”, “telephone children”. The fact is overlooked that the use of stigmatizing terms in the public discourse may cause secondary stigmatization. Besides, one tends to observe a manifestation of the long-standing tradition to speak in the name of children without asking them for their opinion.

The focus of this article is on the general design of doing sociological research on FPAs and CPAs as well as on the main observations, obtained during the four-stage research study, carried out at the Department of Sociology at Vilnius University since 2005³.

General design of the research study

Due to the fact that FPAs are encountered as new phenomenon in family life the question could be raised, whether these transnational family structures, brought about by emigration processes, pose an alternative to a nuclear family as was the case in the past with cohabitation, commuting families, and Living Apart Together? The lack of empirical research data as well as theoretical considerations on these new lived realities forced the search for theoretical background and research methods. Several *goals* were envisioned.

Firstly, analyze FPAs as lived realities, experienced by different family members as well as the members of families’ social networks. The aim was to disclose different points of view on the new parents-children variations as it is obvious that the phenomenon takes a different shade if we look at it from the point of view of parents, children, guardians, “significant others” (teachers, neighbors, friends, etc.). In addition, we were interested in the way these issues are presented in Lithuanian mass media.

Secondly, use multi-method strategy to study FPAs and CPAs, namely, application of the following research methods: content analysis of articles and comments from newspapers and internet portal, headline analysis and article analysis performed with the help of software programme “Hamlet II” (author Alan Brier), qualitative semi-structured interviews with teachers, social workers, police officers, Levin’s (1989,

³ Research study is a part of two research projects: “Lithuanian Emigrants and their Children: sociological research of Families with parents abroad”, supported by Scientific Council at Vilnius university; “Resources, Locality and Life Course: the case of the town”, supported by Lithuanian National Foundation for Science and Education.

1993) three stage family research method (family list, family map, interview), survey, carried out in a small town Pabrade in Lithuania.

Thirdly, test several theoretical approaches and models to know which one is suitable to analyze FPAs and CPAs. Each of the approaches allowed analyze FPAs from different perspectives. At different research stages FPAs were looked as dyadic structures, as social networks, as social families, as families under the stress.

Taking the perspective of FPAs as *dyadic structures*, the analysis of the research data was based on dyadic approach, proposed by Trost (1993, 1999; Juozeliuniene, 2003). Dyadic approach is used as analytic tool to study families as variations of dyads, such as child-mother, child-father, child-grandparent, etc.

The study of FPAs as *social networks*, was carried out within individual's social networks approach, suggested by Milardo & Wellman (2005). The focus was on the role of outsiders on the internal dynamics of relationships. The "close ties" as well as "weak ties" were examined, four basic types of personal networks, proposed by Milardo (2005) were employed: network of "significant others", exchange network, interactive network, global network.

Basing on the concept of social family, proposed by Scanzoni (1993) FPAs were considered as *social families*. Following the departure of one/both parents abroad, guardians, grandparents, friends and other individuals can be perceived as members of one's family. In this case individuals are not necessarily related by blood relations, yet due to the external and internal mutual exchanges (generalized and dyadic) binding these individuals, a familial feeling of "we-ness" is constructed.

The departure of parent(s) abroad allowed to analyze FPAs as *families under the stress*. Hill's (1949) "Family stress" or ABC-X model has been employed. In this case FPAs could be treated as social systems under the stress. The model demonstrates that family stress or crisis marked by the 'X' sign depends on a number of components: A – event entitled stressor, B – family resources or nature of power resources, C – meanings that family ascribes to stressor (McKenry & Price, 2005). We were especially interested in two important assumptions, included in this model. The first assumption states that the effect of stressor is mediated by family resources and situational judgments adopted by

family members, the second - stressor exhibits a potential of spreading further. In other words, one stressor – for example, the departure of parents – can set in motion a chain reaction of family changes, such as changes in interpersonal relations, illness, divorce, delinquent behavior of children, etc.

The stages of the research study

Each step of the four-stage current research envisioned specific goals, research methods and theoretical approaches. The first stage of research study “Representation of FPAs in articles and comments on these articles in Lithuanian dailies and internet portal DELFI” was carried out in 2005. The first appeared articles and comments were analyzed. We aimed to establish the key issues and draw the broadest guidelines for further sociological research. The content analysis was carried out with 6 selected articles on the topic of FPA published in 2004-2005 in Lithuanian daily, regional newspaper and magazine as well as content analysis of 120 comments on these publications.

The second stage, entitled as “Representation of FPAs in newspapers and magazines in 2004- 2006”, was carried out in late 2006. We aspired to establish what semantic field dominates in descriptions of FPAs, how the unique nature of FPAs is reflected in articles’ headlines, what is the structure and specific features of analyzed articles. Articles were selected using integrated informational system of Lithuanian libraries. 38 articles, published during 2004-2006, were chosen for analysis. Their total word count equals 38,000 words. Headline analysis and article analysis was performed with the help of software programme “Hamlet II”.

The third stage “Child’s perspective: stigmatization and stigma management” was carried out in 2006. The results of the research above point out the fact that experiences of children constitute the main topic in the public debates, at the same time, mostly adult’s interpretations are referred to as children’s opinions. That was the reason to interview children. 8 children from 6 different types of FPAs were selected to be interviewed, using I. Levin’s three-stage family research method.

During the fourth stage “Child’s social networks: concerned persons, experts, child”, carried in 2006-2007, the way of “doing family” with parents abroad was examined. The points of concerned persons (those, who wrote comments in internet on the topic of

FPAs and CPAs); experts (teachers, social workers, police officers) and children were analyzed. 15 articles on the topic of FPAs, published in 2005-2007 and 6898 commentaries on these articles were selected for content analysis; four experts were interviewed, using semi-structured qualitative interviews; six children were interviewed, using Levin's three-stage family research method.

Recently, four further stages of the research study are in the process. The stage, entitled "FPAs and local community" envisions the goal by means of the representative survey disclose, whether FPAs are conceptualized as families alongside with nuclear family, cohabitation, commuting families, LATs or they are labelled as "deviations"; examine social reception of FPAs in terms of approval/dissapproval. The other on-going stages focus on representation of FPAs and CPAs in Lithuanian National TV programmes, content analysis of childrens' letters and participant observation of children with delinquent behavior at Vilnius Police Club.

Results

The results show that although FPAs obtain common structural, behavioral, and emotional features, this group is not a homogenous group. Thus, it would be inappropriate to refer to FPAs, in general. We could distinguish the types of FPAs by using at least three criteria. First, according to which member of the family has left abroad (mother, father, both parents). Mother-away, father-away, both parents-away families are distinguished. It is important to note that in many articles and comments father-away families are not labeled as FPAs and a child who lives with mother in Lithuania is not considered to be "abandoned". Second, FPAs vary according to parents' marital status on the day of emigration (spouses, cohabitants, divorced, widowed, single), third, according to the nature of child's foster care in Lithuania (children are looked after by mother/father, grandparents, uncles/aunts, brothers/sisters, other relatives, they live in orphan homes or alone). In every case, the structure of FPAs, the experience of "doing families", and coping strategies are different.

The analysis of representation of FPAs in newspapers and magazines in 2004-2006 disclosed that Lithuanian media is used to view FPAs through the prism of negative consequences of emigration and devotes important places to these articles within publications. The most attention is focused on the negative aspects of parents'

departure, that is, negative emotions experienced by children: sadness, loneliness and feeling of being betrayed, lack of love and attention. Improvement of material well-being is considered to be the principal motive for emigration. In discussion about emigrants, economic semantic field remains dominant.

Children with parents abroad are defined as a separate group. CPAs got the names, such as “lost generation”, “the children of runaways’ – unfortunates”, “orphans with living parents”, “nobody’s children”, “abandoned children”, “telephone children”, “not-needed children”. CPAs are compared with the children of “broken homes”, children of divorce, seamen’s children, lonely mothers’ children, long-distance drivers’ children. CPAs are described in terms of “otherness” with two types of meaning ascribed to the term: negative and positive. Unique CPAs “problems” (both, emotional and behavior) are announced.

Several dominant topics of representation of CPAs emotional well-being and peculiarities of communication in Lithuanian press and internet portal were disclosed, namely, desolation of the child, stigmatization of the child, discussion about the meaning of the term “to love” a child, discussion about the meaning of the term “to abandon” a child.

The analysis of articles and commentaries showed that two meanings are applied to the term of children’s desolation: desolation as “waiting” (behaviour characteristic); desolation as “hyper-sensitivity”/“hyper-aggressiveness” (emotional characteristic). Desolation as waiting is defined as constant waiting for parents’ phone call, presents, parents’ arrival for holidays and final return. Most often the only means of communication with parents is talks on the phone. The frequency of phone calls splits life of a child into periods, important to him: “from call to call”. Children do not look forward to weekends or holidays, but waiting for visiting days of their parents, fixed phone call days or hours. In other words, we can speak about specific time partition and its sensation.

Desolation as “hyper-sensitivity”/“hyper-aggressiveness” are explained as deviations from “normal sensitivity”/“normal aggressiveness”. “Hyper-sensitivity” manifests through the search of “significant others” (tutors, teachers from children’s home, other persons, teenage groups, “street teams”, etc.). “Hyper-aggressiveness” – use of force,

“rejection”, avoidance.

Stigmatization of CPAs holds the image of CPA as being different, not like children from “normal families”. In this case “non-standard” parent-children relations are emphasised. Usually the negative meanings are attributed to this image, such as “parents leave a child for money“, “a child is not loved” (parents would never leave a child they love). It is shameful to be “abandoned”.

The term “to love” a child holds such meanings as taking care of a child’s material welfare, as well as his psychological health, sacrificing yourself for the benefit of the child, living with a child in one household and constantly communicate, after departure, calling a child, sending presents, money, feeling guilty, crying at night, being sad.

We came up to the two types of meanings ascribed to the term “abandon” a child: blaming and justifying meanings.

Qualitative interviews with CPAs allowed analysis of the process of constructing stigma. We distinguished two ways of stigmatizing CPAs: stigmatization through slander and stigmatization through consolation and pity. Stigmatization through slander is conveyed by referring to children as “poorly” behaved, low-achieving at school, “unloved”, “abandoned”, simply labeled a “Bad” child. A child accepts stigma being delegated and proceeds to call himself/herself a “bad” child.

We named stigmatization through consolation and pity as a hidden form. In describing children, adults emphasize their “otherness”. These children are depicted as “lacking in warmth”, “cut off parental support”, “in search of related people”. Having defined the “otherness” of CPAs, adults “feel compelled” to chat up, console these children, grant them exceptional treatment, offer all kinds of assistance. A child accepts “otherness” bestowed on him/her and proceeds to think about him/herself in terms of adults’ categories. In other words, they feel lonely, “abandoned”.

On the basis of research data we distinguished three stigma management strategies utilized by CPAs: concealing, slander and demonstration of advantages. Concealing manifests in conceal the fact that parents left for abroad, unwillingness to talk about this topic by playing down the importance of this event. Slander strategy is detected in recounting of life stories of similar families in an exceptionally negative context,

contrasted with the positive experience of ones own family. The strategy of demonstrating advantages is manifest in listing numerous advantages of “living without parents”: more freedom in decision-making and behaving, less of adult control, new skills, and unrestricted use of ones home. It is very close to the stigma managing strategies, namely, passing, verbal denigration and posturing, suggested by Roschele & Kaufman (2004).

Conclusions

The results of the four-stage research study disclosed the ways in which triangulation of research methods and theoretical approaches could be placed at the heart of sociological research of FPAs and CPAs. Lived realities of FPAs as social constructs with features of family stress, social family, original dyadic structure and transnational networking require articulation of various theoretical approaches and research methods as well as combination of them in an innovative fashion.

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Exploring motives to remarry and sources of marital discord using quantitative and qualitative data

Kirsi Pankarinkangas

Introduction

This paper is part of an ongoing doctoral dissertation which concerns remarriages of widows and widowers in middle and old age. The main themes are the motives for remarrying and the reasons for hesitation concerning remarriage (Pankarinkangas 2007), and the quality and stability of the remarriages.

The frame of this study is in the multidisciplinary discussion concerning new couple relationships (e.g. LAT-relationships, cohabitation, remarriage) in later life. For example, Carr (2004) argues that studying later-life partner relationships is important, since the proportion of older adults is increasing. In addition to the demographic level, there are important psychological and social issues related to the phenomenon. People long for intimacy and affection at older ages as well (Travis 1987; Bernardes 1997) and loneliness is a threat to well-being (Routasalo & Pitkälä 2003). As social norms are weakening, more possibilities also open up for making decisions concerning one's intimate relationships (Haavio-Mannila & Kontula 2001; de Jong Gierveld 2004).

The starting point for this paper was the observation that quantitative and qualitative data conveyed somewhat different images of the motives to remarry and the sources of marital discord. I will start by describing the method and comparing the findings. I will then proceed by discussing the results and potential explanations for the discrepancies in the results and some methodological issues.

Method

The data was gathered through questionnaires sent to all persons who had been widowed, had married a second time at the age of 50 or older, whose new marriage had lasted one to two years and were Finnish-speaking and lived in Finland. The contact information for the respondents was obtained through the Finnish Population Register

Centre. The questionnaire was based on literature and prior research (e.g. Spanier 1976; Busby et al. 1995; Haavio-Mannila & Kontula 2001; Kastinen 2003) as well as three pilot interviews. The response rate was 74 percent (n = 308). Women participated more actively than men (p = .033). The gender distribution of the participants was quite even. The average age of the women was 61.5 years and men were about three years older (64.7 years). The oldest respondents were over 80 years old.

The quantitative data concerning the motives to remarry was based on the answers to the following question: “How much did the following issues influence your decision to marry your present spouse?” The respondents replied to 25 statements (e.g. I wanted to formalize our relationship.) by using a five-point scale from 0 which meant ‘no influence at all’ to 4 ‘influenced very much’. The qualitative data was gathered by asking the respondents to answer one open-ended question: “Would you describe in your own words why you preferred remarriage to dating or common-law marriage?”

Similarly, the quantitative data concerning the sources of marital discord were collected by asking: How often do you and your spouse agree or disagree on the following issues? Answers were given using a five-point scale from 1: ‘we always disagree’ to 5 ‘we always agree’. In addition, there was one open-ended question: “If you quarrel with your spouse, what are the most common causes of the contention?”, which constituted the qualitative data. The structured part of the questionnaire was analysed statistically (mean, median, percentages, Chi-square). The written answers were categorized and the percentages in each category were calculated by gender (number of answers in a category / total number of answers by gender).

Research questions

There were two main questions, which were divided into sub-questions. The main question concerning the motives was: What were the main motives for the remarriage of widows and widowers in middle age and old age? The sub-questions were: “What were the most significant motives for remarrying?” (quantitative data) and “Why did widows and widowers want to remarry instead of continuing to live together or date? (qualitative data). The main question concerning the sources of marital discord was: “What were the main sources of marital discord of widows and widowers?” The sub-questions were: “What were the main issues that caused disagreements?”

(quantitative data) and “What were the most typical causes of contention?” (qualitative data).

Results

Motives for remarrying. On the basis of the quantitative data, the most significant motives for remarriage were feelings of closeness and confidence to the partner (M 3.55), love (3.50), enjoying each other’s company (3.48) and a satisfying mental companionship (3.19). These were the main motives of women and men, although the order was slightly different. However, on the basis of the qualitative data, the largest category of both women’s and men’s answers was comprised of life values, which often referred to religious conviction, but women in particular emphasized to an almost equal extent as the life values, the security, stability, commitment and clarity the remarriage would bring (see Table 1).

TABLE 1: Why remarriage instead of dating or living together? Categorization and percentual distribution of the answers by gender (n = 231; women n = 127, 172 answers; men n = 104, 119 answers).

	Women’s answers	Men’s answers
Life values	18	26
Security, stability, commitment, clarity	17	17
”Old-fashionedness”, traditions, upbringing	14	12
Juridical and financial issues	13	7
Natural / better choice, truism	8	8
Influence of others		
a) Partner’s wish / “pressure”	6	4
b) Pressure / disapproval or wish of others	6	5
Love	5	3
Significance of relationship / partner	2	5
Pragmatic solution / choice	2	3
New beginning	<1	2
“Other”	8	8
Total	100	100

Comparison of the findings. Firstly, there was some overlap in the results as a whole, but in this paper I will focus on the differences in the two sets of the findings, since they were more apparent than the similarities. While the emphasis in the quantitative findings was on warm, deep emotions and companionship, the answers to the open-ended question stressed life values, the security, stability and clarity the marriage would bring, along with the desire to follow “old- fashioned traditions” or the way one was

brought up, whereas love, as a motive to remarry, was marginal. Thus, the “quantitative motives” could be described as relationship-oriented or dyadic motives whereas the emphasis of “the qualitative motives” seemed to be on values, norms and so-called “safe base”-oriented motives.

Marital discord. On the basis of the quantitative data there were no major disagreements in remarriages. On average (median), the respondents “often agreed” with their spouse on every issue and the means varied between 3.69 (politics) and 4.34 (notions of marriage and family life). Based on the total data, the issues on which the greatest proportion of the respondents at least sometimes disagreed were politics (42 %), habits (36 %), raising children and the responsibility of children (31 %; n = 180), drinking alcohol (29 %) and manners (28 %) (see Figure 1).

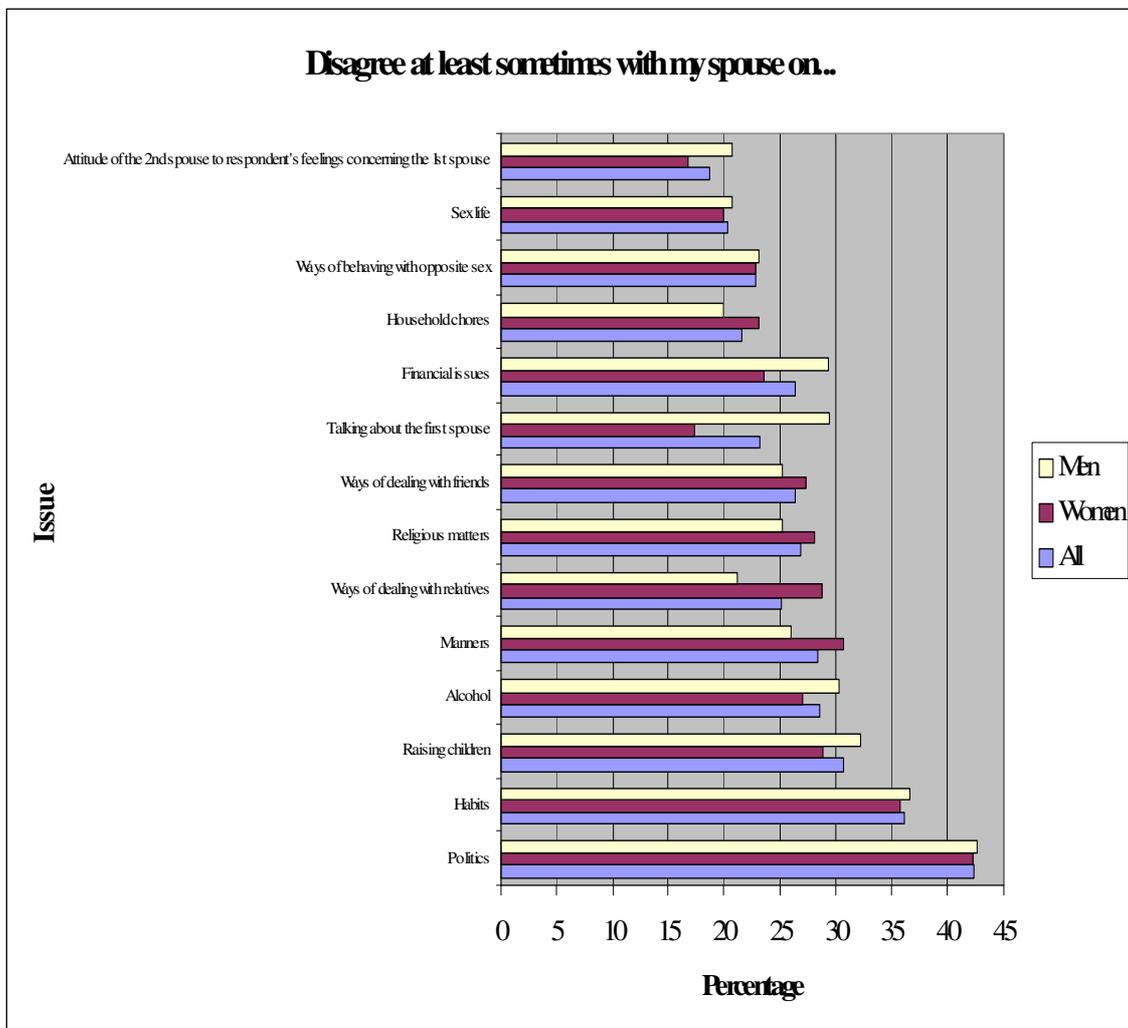


FIGURE 1: The percentages (20 % or higher proportion) of men, women and all respondents who at least sometimes disagree with their spouse.

The largest category in the causes of contention of both genders in the qualitative analysis was dissimilarity between the spouses (for example, differences concerning likes, opinions, habits and characteristics) (see Table 2). In addition trivialities, interaction and communication and financial issues were also among the largest categories.

TABLE 2: Causes of contention. Categorization and percentual distribution of the answers by gender (n = 120, or 52 % of those who quarrel with their spouse.¹ Women (n = 71) gave 92 answers and men (n = 49) 57.

	Women's answers		Men's answers
	%		%
Dissimilarity	17	Dissimilarity	21
Interaction	14	Interaction	12
Trivialities	12	Trivialities	18
Financial issues	12	Financial issues	12
Alcohol	10	Alcohol	5
Family, children	9	Family, children, friends	12
Hobbies and leisure	8	Hobbies and leisure	0
"Past life" and its relationships	8	"Past life" and its relationships	0
Division of power and responsibilities at home	5	Division of power and responsibilities at home	9
Religious issues	3	Religious issues	0
Own and spouse's characteristics	0	Own and spouse's characteristics	5
Distrust	2	Jealousy	4
"Other"	0	"Other"	2
Total	100	Total	100

Comparison of findings. Once again it seemed that the quantitative and qualitative findings were divergent, so that at first glance it seemed that they were completely different. It seemed that the main causes of contention in the qualitative analysis represented 'concrete' dimensions of the relationship, issues which were more tightly involved in everyday life, whereas the main issues causing disagreements in the quantitative analysis reflected more general principles, values or issues which were not actively present in everyday life. However, there were also overlapping issues in the quantitative and qualitative analyses: between dissimilarities and habits and dissimilarities and politics, since the category of dissimilarities included habits and opinions, including political ones. Moreover, there were common issues – for example,

¹ The response rate is based on the number of participants who responded that they quarrel with their spouse.

drinking, issues concerning family and friends and financial issues – among both sets of findings.

Conclusions and discussion²

Generally, the main results of the men and women were parallel. “The main quantitative and qualitative motives” were the same for both groups. However, in the women’s qualitative answers juridical and financial issues were emphasized more and in the men’s responses life values had a greater weighting than in the women’s³. In “the quantitative sources of marital discord” the results were distributed by gender so that in comparison to the main results based on the total data, in the women’s data drinking alcohol and manners in men’s were not among the top five issues (see Figure 1). In “the qualitative sources of marital discord” the main categories of both genders were the same, but in the men’s answers trivialities were emphasized more and in the women’s data there were a greater proportion of alcohol-related answers. In addition, there were some categories which were absent in women’s data and vice versa. However, the main results of the men and women were similar enough to permit discussing the findings in this paper without referring to gender.

Even though the quantitative and qualitative results did not portray a completely different picture of the motives and sources of marital discord, the emphases were different. Should this kind of outcome be considered a problem?⁴ Is it possible to draw conclusions about the main motives to remarry and the main sources of marital discord in remarriages of widows and widowers on the basis of two kinds of data?

I start my discussion by examining some potential explanations for the discrepancies in the findings concerning motives. Although I have discussed some of these issues earlier (Pankarinkangas 2007), an analysis of Moffatt et al. (2006) helped me considerably to clarify and rephrase my ideas. Thus, the following is adapted from Moffatt et al. (2006).

² I thank the participants in the workshop “Qualitative and quantitative comparative research in cultural context” for the discussion on my presentation and the insights which have helped me write this paper.

³ Notice that the number of women’s answers was greater than men’s in both of the qualitative data.

⁴ The discussion is based on the exploration of the empirical results – the epistemological questions are outside the scope of this paper.

First of all, the two questions – the question in the structured part and the open-ended question - were not identical, though related (see Moffatt et al. 2006). Moreover, only three of four answered the open-ended question. It is possible that the group is selected compared to those who answered the quantitative question (see Moffatt et al. 2006). Furthermore, perhaps people tend to answer structured questions in a more culturally acceptable way than open-ended questions (or face-to-face interviews) (cf. Hurme 1988), whereas the reasons for opting for remarriage instead of another type of couple relationship are perhaps more personal descriptions. Moreover, the order of the quantitative and qualitative questions may have had an impact on the results: since the respondent already had indicated the significance – for example – of love in the structured part of the questionnaire, perhaps the scarcity of “love-answers” in the qualitative part was due to a desire to avoid repeating oneself? However, the format of the questions tried to give the impression that all kinds of answers were acceptable, regardless of the previous question. After all, some gave love-related answers to the open-ended question as well and, on the other hand, there was also, for example, a religion-related question in the structured part of the questionnaire.

But what are my conclusions? Since the questions were not identical, I could have considered that one of the sets of findings was ‘the correct version’ (Moffatt et al. 2006). However, I never really considered that, because I argue that it would have been impossible to come to a valid conclusion about the superiority of one set of the findings over of the other. I therefore decided to determine whether – in spite of the discrepancies – it would be possible to somehow integrate the findings into a (coherent) picture of the phenomenon.

As the result, I formulated an answer concerning the main motives in this way: in the light of both the quantitative and qualitative data, it seems that companionship would be a strong candidate for the main motive for remarriage, especially if one interprets the answers to the open-ended question to include security, stability and commitment as reflecting companionship as well. Instead, the position of love seemed shakier. Furthermore, the “quantitative motives” seemed to reflect a certain kind of “relationship/companionship” whereas the “qualitative motives” represented life-companionship. A conclusion of this kind is not, however, satisfactory, since integration of the findings obscures the richness and variation of the results. Consequently, I

conclude that the results reflect different aspects of the phenomenon (see Moffatt et al. 2006), the closed question reflecting the “influence” dimension and the open-ended question the cause or reason component of the concept of motive. Thus, even though there were discrepancies in the findings, they are complementary by nature – conceptually and content-wise as well. For example: if I had ignored the qualitative part of the results, I would argue that love plays a major role in the decision of widows and widowers to remarry. However, it seems that this is not the whole ‘truth’ (see Moffatt et al. 2006.)

The different nature of the questions asked in the questionnaire was also the proper starting point for examining the discrepancies in the findings concerning the sources of marital discord as well. Again, the questions were related, but perhaps they were even more different than in the case of motives. The possible impact of the lower response rate should also be kept in mind. Regardless, if I follow the path outlined above and attempt to integrate the results into one answer on the basis of both types of data, a tentative conclusion could be dissimilarity in (political) opinions, habits, likes and characteristics. But once again, such a general interpretation would conceal many interesting and essential features of the findings – for example, trivialities, which were completely missing in the quantitative results.

I think that I could arrive at the same kind of conclusion I did with the motives: instead of trying to integrate the findings, I could understand the phenomenon by acknowledging their complementary nature. Disagreeing and arguing both fit under the concept of marital discord, but they settle themselves in different places on the continuum, which reflects the severity or explicitness of the discord. An example of this was the position of politics as a source of marital discord. More than 40 percent of the respondents at least sometimes disagreed on politics, but the number actually arguing over it were very few. So, if wife and husband disagree on something, this does not necessarily mean that they actually argue about it; in contrast, the spouses may have reached an agreement that they disagree on something and still can live with it. I speculated above about the nature of the issues causing disagreements and, on the other hand, more overt argument. I suggested that some of the issues causing disagreement would reflect more abstract matters whereas issues that cause arguments would be more tightly intertwined with daily life in the relationship. Perhaps values and principles are

not matters which are explicitly present on a daily basis and as a source of discord, whereas, for example, trivialities are by nature issues that pop up in daily life of couples.

Therefore, should the divergent findings be considered as a methodological problem? Obviously, I think that the answer is no. I agree with Moffatt et al. (2006, referring to Brannen 1992 and Bryman 1995), who argue that “Bringing different methods together almost inevitably raises discrepancies in findings and their interpretation. However, the investigation of such differences may be as illuminating as their points of similarity.” If I had examined the motives to marry and the sources of marital discord using only the quantitative or qualitative method, I could have perhaps offered a more coherent but less informative picture of the phenomena.

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Combining quantitative and qualitative methods in analysing youth transition to adulthood in Finland and France

Aurélie Mary

Introduction

Recently, there has been a growing interest in youth transition to adulthood in advanced societies. An important number of 20- and 30-somethings remain dependent on their parents or on the state for a longer period of time than the previous generations did. Similarly, they experience difficulties in integrating in society. Prolonged transition is commonly related to changes in the production structure, in the labour market structure, in the housing market and policies, and increased participation in higher education. There are a number of studies discussing the issue of delayed transition to adulthood in contemporary societies, such as Bradley and van Hoof (2005), Furlong and Cartmel (1997), Galland (2004), Holdsworth and Morgan (2005).

The purpose of this paper is to discuss methodological issues in analysing youth transition to adulthood in Finland and France. Although significant research has been devoted to youths' prolonged transition, few studies have used comparative empirical methods to analyse the phenomenon between different European societies. The present research focuses on young adults aged 25 to 29 and investigates their current life situation, with reference to their parents' generation, known as the Baby Boomers generation.

This paper is divided into four sections. The first part offers an insight of cross-country comparison and presents the major aspects that need to be taken into account in the enquiry of case countries. The second part concentrates on the main differences of the two generations' socio-economic contexts. The third part discusses empirical methods of research used in the study. Finally, a discussion on practical methodological challenges will close the paper.

Youth transition to adulthood in Finland and France

Youth transition to adulthood is investigated in Finland and France. Cross-country comparison reveals patterns of similarities and differences between the case countries regarding social phenomena. In order to understand the variations in the patterns of transition, it is necessary to analyse the two societies' structural backgrounds at the social, political, economic and cultural levels. For example, it has been observed that young Finnish people tend to leave the parental home at a younger age than their French counterparts, who remain dependent on their family for longer. One reason for this tendency might be related to structural differences in the countries' welfare systems. According to Esping-Andersen (1990), Finland belongs to the social democratic type of welfare based on dualism between the state, the market and social classes. The regime favours state support and universal distribution of social assistance. In this respect, the state encourages youth independence via channels of allowances, such as grants, loans, or housing benefits (Oinonen 2004). In contrast, France belongs to the continental type of welfare regime founded on a conservative-corporatist system, which promotes family support and offers assistance based on citizens' status (Esping-Andersen 1990). Advantageous benefits encourage the family to remain the major source of care. To put it shortly, in Finland public measures help the youths when they move out of the parental home and enter the labour market, whereas in France the state provides funds to the family which subsequently redistributes assistance to its members (Laaksonen 2000; Esping-Andersen 1999).

Different generations, different socio-economic contexts

Young people's transition to adulthood is analysed with reference to the contemporary social structure as well as to the living conditions of their parents, who belong to the generation born after the Second World War, referred to as the Baby Boomers generation. This comparison is particularly appropriate as it refers to a generation where most members followed conventional patterns of transition to adulthood; finishing school, finding a job, leaving the parental home and forming a family. In opposite, contemporary young adults follow unpredictable patterns of transition. For instance, many of them do not necessarily get a job after finishing school and might continue to live in the parental home, or they might be in a relationship and have children while

being on a course at university.

Industrialised societies experienced exceptional economic prosperity after the Second World War, until the mid 1970s. This period has been characterised as a “Golden Era”, and these “30 Glorious Years” can be identified as an historical exception. The people born in this era benefited from very secure economic conditions, with full-time employment and high possibilities of upward professional and social mobility (Chauvel 2002; Lipietz 1992). Parallel to economic growth, important social, political and cultural transformations took place, such as the rise of feminism or secularisation. In consequence, the traditional existential patterns shaping people’s life course altered. The youths could no longer identify to the old ideologies concerning living arrangements that were essentially dictated by the church, such as having to marry in order to live together (Chauvel 2002). They thus contributed actively to the implementation of new systems of values more suitable to their ideologies. For example, they started new social trends such as cohabitation and/or have children outside marriage. Simultaneously, youth emancipation and the importance given to the status of youth led to the construction of the youth culture. Young people gained social recognition and social space in terms of politics, education, and popular culture (Galland 1990). The secure socio-economic framework and the period of transition that advanced societies were undergoing at that time offered young people the possibilities to reshape a large part of the established order so that it would meet their prerequisites better.

However, since the mid-1970s, advanced societies have been through a period of economic stagnation that led to a huge rise in unemployment, insecurity in accessing the labour market for a long-lasting period, and cuts in public expenditures (Alestalo & Kuhnle 1987; Esping-Andersen 1999). In the case of France, the economic decline that started in the mid-1970s persisted through the 1980s and 1990s, and continues to affect young people’s integration into society. In opposite, Finland experienced fluctuation, with an important economic boom in the 1980s, a severe downhill in the 1990s after the fall of European socialism, and anew expansion since the late 1990s. However, integration into the labour market remains difficult in the two societies. What has really changed in advanced societies is the nature of the labour market, which is much more demanding in terms of the workforce flexibility. Positions on the labour market are uncertain on the long-term, and people are more likely to experience periods of

structural unemployment and to have to follow diverse professional paths during their working life (Aglietta 1979; Furlong & Cartmel 1997; Liptietz 1992).

Nevertheless, the Baby Boomers' incomparable destiny has become a normalised cultural model that is still prevailing today, although it is increasingly incompatible with today's reality (Chauvel 2002). The younger generation is considered as more passive than active because of its lack of apparent participation in society. A large number of young people suffer from a lack of clear definition of their social role and social identity. The problem is that the establishment has not been built to respond to their needs but to the ones of their elders', and continues to privileged them (Chauvel 2002; Edmund & Turner 2002).

Methods of research

Case-country comparison

The present research is based on the "case-oriented comparative" approach that examines a number of variables within each case (Ragin 1987). The study concentrates on four aspects of youth transition in Finland and France: youth employment and unemployment; youth participation in higher education; the age of leaving home; starting a family. These features are enquired using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. Existing sources of data, such as internationally comparable and standardised set of statistics produced by Eurostats, ILO or OECD, provide information on social trends. Eurobarometers, the European Community Household Panel Survey (ECHP), or the European Social Survey (ESS) supply data on beliefs, behavioural patterns and attitudes of different population groups within each member state of the European Union.

Nonetheless, youth transition is an unsubstantial phenomenon difficult to evaluate and measure. For this reason, multiple methods and data are needed. Statistics offer evidence about social tendencies but they do not explain the causes of their occurrence (Ragin 1987). In order to acquire a deeper perspective on the process of transition, open-ended interviews will be conducted in the spring and autumn 2008 in France and Finland respectively. Direct feedback from young people will certainly give access to distinctive characteristics on transition.

The sample will be composed by twenty young women aged 25 to 29 (about 10 respondents in each country) who are about to finish university and enter working life, hence in the middle of the process of transition. The interviews will be conducted in French in France and in English and Finnish in Finland. Only women will be included in the survey, for practical reasons. This study is a doctoral research and interviewing a larger population such as both males and females would be too demanding in terms of time and amount of work. Moreover, the research is not planned for a gender comparative dimension. The focus is on generation and country comparison. Furthermore, the interviewer's gender can affect the information the respondents reveal. Depending on the research topic, female respondents might talk more openly to an interviewer of the same age and sex, whereas opposite-sex informants may be more reluctant to disclose some information (Jones 1991; William & Heikes 1993). Finally, most studies on transition focus on both genders, while young women's views on their current life situation and future expectations might be particularly distinctive.

The interviews will cover the same themes than those in the statistics. In a first part, respondents will be asked to discuss their own experiences and attitudes towards transition in relation to the labour market, the educational system, leaving home and starting a family. In the second part, I will enquire on their life situation compared with their parents' experiences and possibilities at the same age. Finally, I will ask how they perceive their opportunities in the future and what their feelings are towards the future in relation to their chances and possibilities of integration in society.

Generation comparison

The main purpose of the present research is to study whether and how macro-level factors affect young adults' integration into society. According to Mannheim (1952), a generation can be considered as such when individuals around the same age go through similar social, political, cultural or historical events during their formative years. Although they might come from different social backgrounds, a significant number of young people keep enduring the negative consequences of economic restructuring, struggling to integrate the labour force and to plan their future. These difficulties could be a common characteristic shared by the young people that might distinguish them as a generation.

Young adults' life situation is compared with the previous generation's social context and experiences in order to get a clearer understanding of the impact the recent social transformations bears upon the youths. Age groups or cohorts are examined so as to obtain measurable data. Thus, the living arrangements of the 25- and 30-somethings years old born in 1975-1979 and 1980-1984 are compared to their parents, more likely to belong to the Baby Boomers cohort, born in 1945-1950. Secondary sources of comparable data similar to those used in the frame of cross-country comparison are utilised in this aspect of the study too.

The theme of generation is approached in the interviews as well. Respondents will be asked to discuss their own life conditions with that of their parents'. Interviewing informants' parents would certainly provide valuable information; however, questioning them would require a considerable amount of time. Moreover, such an investigation would deserve a larger coverage than a segment in a doctoral thesis. Undoubtedly, further research comparing Baby Boomers' and their children's processes of transition would offer significant knowledge to the fields of youth research and comparative sociology. Nonetheless, enquiring respondents on their parents might offer a good account of how *they* perceive that generation. The present study concerns young people; therefore, offering them a chance to voice their perspectives on the situation is of central importance.

Conclusion: methodological challenges

Triangulation, or various methods of analysis, is used in this study in order to obtain a more intelligible account of the phenomenon of transition to adulthood. The use of both quantitative and qualitative methods allows to look at the process from different angles and to provide complementary sources of data. However, I have encountered various challenges during the empirical process of the research. The main challenge is to obtain comparable data, in particular regarding the cohorts. For instance, today, rates of unemployment are measured per sections among the active population; hence, age groups such as the 25 to 29 years old are distinguished, which rarely occurred before the 1980s. The data concerning the previous generation at the same age is based on different age categories. In addition, some tendencies, such as cohabitating couples, were uncommon thirty or forty years ago and developed recently, thus any or few

records are available on this issue. In the same way, techniques of data collection and definitions of social indicators vary in time, and from country to country. In that sense, it remains difficult to find comparable data about social trends that focus on the 25 to 29 age group before 1985.

Here is a concrete illustration of a practical problem often encountered during data analysis. A study's data show that young people born around 1960 were leaving home at around the same age (21.5 years old for men and 19.8 years old for women) in both Finland and France, with a slight difference between men and women, young women leaving earlier (Billari, Philipov & Baizán 2001). However, the results are different for the youths born at the end of the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s. Some figures collected in 2002 show that young people in Finland still left the parental home at around the same age (21.9 years old for men and 20.0 years old for women), while in France they left later (24.1 years old for men and 22.2 years old for women) (Iacovou 2001). Other data from 2005 reveal a clearer discrepancy between males and females than between the case countries. Apparently, the age of leaving home in Finland was 23.0 years old for men and 21.5 years old for women, and in France 24.5 years old for men and 23.5 years old for women.

Nevertheless, these findings remain problematical, for the statistics have been calculated differently across the years. The data for the 1960 cohort are based on the *median age* at leaving home, whereas the figures from 2002 and 2005 are respectively based on the *mean age* at leaving home, and the *age at which 50% of young people are leaving*. Few researches have been conducted on the age of leaving the parental home at the large scale and therefore little standardised and comparable data is available. With regard to these particular data, questions remain: how can these figures be used? What can be concluded from statistics that have been processed differently but still portray a clear change? Are the results presented biased or still valid and exploitable to some extent?

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Qualitative microanalysis and the chase after children's perspectives

Niina Rutanen

Introduction

In developmental psychology, researchers use the terms microgenesis and microanalysis in connection with diverse theoretical approaches. Even though various meanings are related to these terms, a common denominator behind the majority of microgenetic methods is to study changes as they occur within and across experimental sessions, instead of procedures whose development is complete (Valsiner & van der Veer, 2000). This approach is in line with *idiographic science* that focuses on time-dependent variation within a single case (intraindividual variation) instead of variation between cases (interindividual variation) (Molenaar, 2004; see also International Journal of Idiographic Science, www.valsiner.com).

Many qualitative studies on children apply an interpretative analysis similar to microanalysis without directly applying the term (e.g. Rainio, 2008; see also Jakkula, 2002). In addition, discourse analysis shares similarities in its focus on the construction of meanings in interactional episodes (as in e.g. Lundán and Suoninen, 2006).

Here, I will discuss the application of qualitative microanalysis in a study on 2- to 3-year-old children's interactions in a daycare centre (Rutanen, 2007b). I will focus on the relation between 1) the here-and-now of events, and 2) the changes during the months of the intervention. How should these two interlinked levels of change be theoretically and empirically dealt with? I will also discuss microanalysis as a tool in understanding the dynamics of children's everyday lives from the child's perspective.

Qualitative microanalysis as a tool to investigate change

Methods are always linked to particular assumptions about the world. Likewise, qualitative microanalysis implies that particular constraints are put on knowledge construction. The starting point is the interest in the processes of the emergence of novel

phenomena instead of prediction of behaviour. In accordance with Vygotsky (1978), in the change and development the nature, *the essence*, of given things is discovered.¹ Methods that investigate a point in time or separate points in time fail to give access to dynamic phenomena (Valsiner, 1997).

In microanalysis, the researcher is interested in a time-based description of the transformation of the phenomenon.² Some applications emphasize the acceleration of the natural change process (Kuhn, 1995). The researcher may arrange particular settings in which the subject has opportunities to engage in the cognitive strategies investigated (e.g. Siegler & Crowley, 1991).

In the case described here, the aim was not to organize experimental settings, but to investigate interactions among children in free-play situations. However, during the data derivation in the daycare centre, it became obvious that instead of applying the obscure term *free-play*, or *natural observations*, a more interesting route was to analyze explicitly the interlinkedness of children's actions and meaning-making to the wider semiotic, material, cultural, and social context. No situation is *free* from the various cultural constraints (Valsiner, 1997; also Rossetti-Ferreira, Amorim, Silva & Carvalho, 2004). In a similar fashion to Branco (1998; 2003), who characterized her recording situations with children as quasi-experimental, I understand the research process as an intervention *where a change is put in action*.

The empirical case: child-child-teacher-researcher interactions

For the study, children were videoed in small groups or dyads twice a month during one year in one daycare centre. From the large corpus of material, four recordings were selected for detailed analysis. In these sessions, Heidi (2 years, 9 months) and Martti (2 years, 7 months) were invited to a separate room to "*play with water*." The preschool teacher and the researcher (NR) remained present. The selected recordings occurred

¹ Even if a developmental approach is applied, I agree with the critique: childhood should not be investigated as a stage of becoming (e.g. Burman, 1994). Instead of discussing either children or adults as more acknowledgeable participants than the others, the focus is on the negotiation of conceptions, intentions, expectations, and meanings. All participants develop in co-regulated actions.

² Valsiner (2004: 19) names microgenesis as one of the levels of generality of the transformation of structures that developmental sciences investigates. "Each of these levels of processes (phylogeny, cultural history, ontogenesis and microgenesis, NR) is characterized by its own functional time unit...microgenesis may be limited to developmental transformations that occur in milli- or micro-seconds"

during the first two months and the last two months of the recording period. Ethnographic methods were also applied in the description of the wider setting (Rutananen, 2007b). After each session, the teacher and the researcher discussed their interpretations and planned the following sessions³. The mothers of the children participated in some of these discussions.

Here, the interpretative analysis connects changes at three interlinked levels: 1) certain specific moments of change are interpreted within the context of the flow of actions of a particular recording session, 2) these changes are discussed in relation to the other selected sessions, and 3) the interpretation of these four recording sessions gains shape in the context of the whole corpus of material and interpretations of the research process.

Co-construction of meanings among the participants

In the analysis⁴, gestures and postures as well as verbalizations were examined as possible indices of meaning-making (Branco, 1998; Lyra & Rossetti-Ferreira, 1995). In addition to verbal communication, particular emphasis was placed on nonverbal communication as well as the role of the material setting. As Heath (2004: 271) describes, the meaning of a gesture might be tied to its physical form as well as the contexts in which it arises. In addition, the physical environment does not have a stable and overarching influence — its relevance and sense are accomplished by the participants during the interaction: “*The sequential and interactional organization of the conduct remains a critical resource for the analysis of how participants themselves orient to each other’s action, make sense of each other’s contributions, and produce their own conduct*” (Heath, 2004: 271). This is in line with a relational approach to communication where meanings emerge in a co-regulated manner (Fogel, 1993). Agreement about meaning is reached in the process of mutual adjustments, in reciprocal regulation (Carvalho, Império-Hamburger & Pedrosa, 1998; Pedrosa, 1989).

³ Some proponents of qualitative microanalysis could criticize the application here as the data collection was not clearly structured before the entrance to the field.

⁴ In the transcription and analysis, I used Transana, a software for qualitative analysis (www.transana.org).

Dynamics within and in-between the sessions

Even if children had been the research subjects (i.e. targets of observation and video recordings), the adults took part in the construction of the flow of actions both directly, being present in the situation, and also indirectly by structuring the material setting.⁵ The adults' expectations, intentions and conceptualizations about children and doing research were *materialized* in the arrangements, instructions and physical objects provided for the children. In this sense, the negotiation of the boundaries for the flow of action in the here-and-now situation began even before the recording started (Figure 1). These arrangements *canalized* the possibilities for children's actions in certain directions more than others (see Rutanen, 2007b).

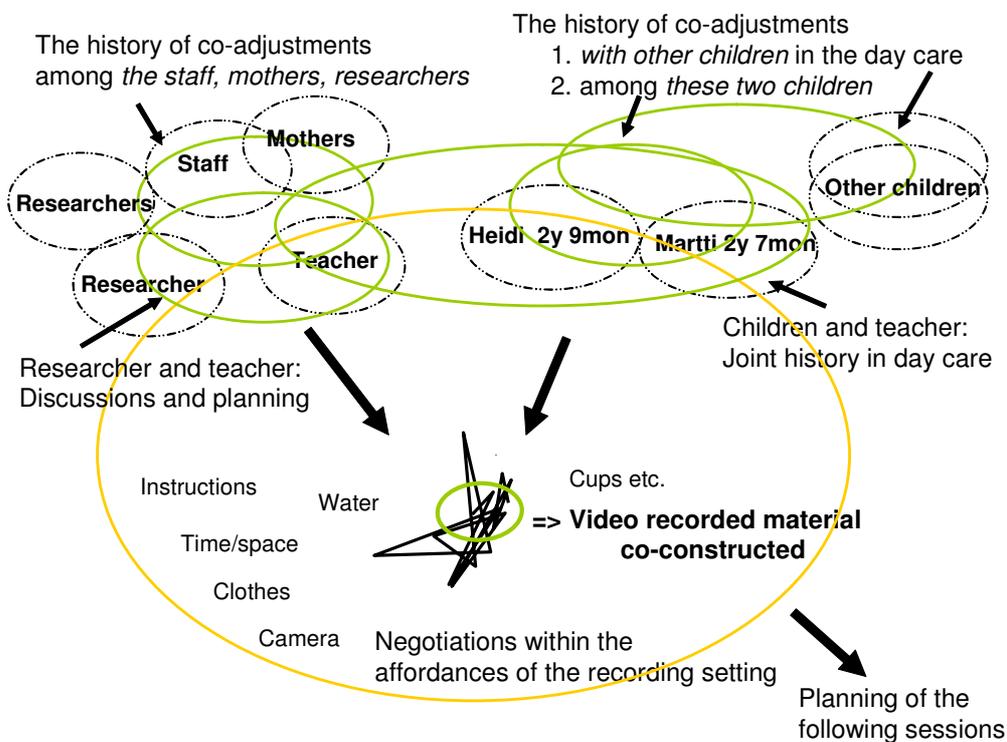


FIGURE 1: Complexity of the negotiations before, during and after the recording session.

The participants did not have to begin the construction of joint activity or understanding from scratch. In participating in sociocultural practices and using sociocultural tools, people establish intersubjectivity without being in direct contact with all the others who

⁵ In the analysis, Valsiner's (1997) discussion on constraint structures and cultural canalization of development was applied.

mediate the practices (Matusov, 1996). It was in relation to the interpretive background (Hundeide, 1993), that reciprocal actions gained meaning.

The sessions show how children needed some time to observe the setting and to make sense of the interpretative background before they engaged in the manipulation of the objects offered. Children did not necessarily follow the explicit verbal instructions, but attempted to discover the adults' implicit intentions. As the recording situations were repeated, children engaged more openly in initiating actions and exploring the boundaries of what was allowed and expected. Previous co-constructions became condensed into shared interpretations and the history of co-adjustments was in the background in the repeated encounters. Indirectly, children also engaged in negotiation of a more elaborated conception of child: a "playful child" may refuse adults' initiations, protest, withdraw and negotiate in terms of control of the body.

Children's perspectives under investigation

In contemporary discussions in the sociology of childhood and early childhood education, various narratives emphasize the active role of children in the making of their everyday lives. In this work, I took the stand that to approach children's perspectives one needs to examine children's (inter)actions in particular situations and analyze how the other participants are engaged in the co-regulated actions. This allowed further interpretations of children's perception of the events and of what is going on in the here-and-now.

With microanalysis, as well as video recordings in general, the researcher has the possibility to investigate each participant's embodied positions in the flow of actions and meaning-making. Instead of a universal *children's perspective*, the analysis underlines a discussion of the different yet partially overlapping perspectives of various actors. Children are not all similar in their personal senses derived in the situations. All have their own, subjective yet socially co-constructed relation to the negotiations taking place.

Interestingly, to be able to discuss these perspectives, the role of the researcher had to be investigated as part of the process.

Concluding remarks

Random, unpredictable, and almost invisible movements may play an important role in young children's construction of meanings and codes. To fully observe and interpret these nonverbal and verbal meaning-making processes, the researcher benefits from the possibility to return to the observations. This is possible with video recordings.

In microanalysis, one focuses on the details of the events in one experimental session or interactive episode. Nevertheless, these sessions or episodes are not detached from the chain of events and wider context. In this sense, *micro* does not imply a focus on a microscopic analysis of a detached event or unique gesture. Events and unique gestures include the co-constructed history of the participants and the reference to future constructions.

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How to analyze the dynamics of parent-child interaction?

Eero Suoninen

Introduction: The need for a new methodology

The traditional view of science makes a clear distinction between scientific and everyday understanding. While everyday knowledge is unsure and fragmented, scientific knowledge is expected to consist of clear and unambiguous facts. This also applies to social scientific knowledge. Usually the most convincing way to gain factual status for interpretations is by statistical analysis based on large number of cases in a data corpus and accurate mathematical conventions in the analysis of the cases. This seems to be the prevailing situation in spite of methodological changes: the advance of qualitative methods and the so-called discursive or linguistic turn. A possible explanation for this paradox is that the authorities of traditional statistical research deny the validity of the new qualitative traditions more often than vice versa. In practice, this means obligations for qualitative/discursive researchers to give explanations to social scientific institutions and public audiences if they do not follow the established rules of scientific research.

What is the problem then, why do researchers not simple adhere to the traditional view and collect statistical facts? The problem lies in the nature of social sciences. Some significant research questions can be answered by means of statistical methods, but others seem to elude statistical measurement and theorising based thereon. The interaction between parents and children provides a good example. It is possible to acquire useful information about interaction through statistical methods, e.g. the correlations between problems of interaction and independent variables, but it is very difficult to get a grasp of complicated interaction processes. The processes, at least the creative or surprising aspect of them, are difficult to translate into the language of independent and dependent variables. Many of the 'independent variables' seem to be constructed, co-constructed and reconstructed in and through the turns of the actual interaction process. Thus it is useful to focus on a detailed analysis of a small number of especially informative cases. This focusing is especially relevant if the

researcher is interested not only in the activities of parents but also in the participation of a child as an active agent in the interaction process.¹

In this paper, I propose an idea of *discursive case study* as one possible way to study the details and nuances of interaction processes between parents and children. By discursive case study I refer to a detailed analysis of the construction of turns and moments of choice in the course of interaction episodes. The idea of discursive case analysis is a combination of the methodologies of discourse analysis (e.g. Potter & Wetherell 1987, Edwards & Potter 1993), conversation analysis (e.g. Heritage 1997, Goodwin 2007) and social constructionist (Shotter 1993, Gergen 1994) and social psychological thinking (Lewin 1935, Marrow 1969, Goffman 1974), which I have discussed in previous publications on methodology (e.g. Suoninen 1993, 1997 and 1999) and family studies (Suoninen 2004 and forthcoming 2008; Suoninen & Lundán 2004).

Case examples: Coping with a family row

I illustrate the discursive case study by means of two case descriptions written by Finnish parents. The instructions to the parents emphasised the aim of collecting the type of everyday episodes or processes that illustrate crucial interaction episodes between parents and that could typify everyday situations in most Finnish families. Instructions for noting observations emphasise as detailed a description as possible. Names and some other details that might jeopardize the anonymity of subjects have been changed.

Description 1: How to get to the day-care centre

- 1 A four-year-old boy, Timo, is sleeping deeply when his parents awake him.
- 2 They have to take him to the day-care centre quickly.
- 3 However, before going out Timo refuses to put on his outdoor clothes, and
- 4 throws himself on the hall floor.
- 5 The parents gently ask Timo what the problem is
- 6 He answers that he “does not want” to get dressed.
- 7 The parents gently plead with their son and explain why they are in a hurry
- 8 No effect.
- 9 The parents promise Timo something nice if he agrees to collaborate.
- 10 He does not.

¹ There is not a theoretical reason for avoiding statistical methodology when analysing interaction in a detailed way. I see the problem more like a practical one. Because the interesting interaction processes between parents and children (e.g. disputes and negotiations) are often very complicated, it is not possible to analyse a sufficient number of cases (with a huge number of possible interaction variables) for a statistically analysis. This might be possible with massive resources.

- 11 The parents hint at unpleasant consequences if Timo does not get dressed.
12 He does not.
13 The parents threaten Timo with very unpleasant consequences if he does not obey.
14 He does not.
15 The father forcibly carries his son to the car.
16 In the yard and hall of the day-care centre, the parents try to restore a warm
17 relationship with their son by the means of gentle chatting. This effort is somewhat
18 artificial because the parents expect to be late for work.

The morning episode starts with parents' difficulties in getting the son Timo to the day-care centre. He refuses to put on his outdoor clothes and he even throws himself on the floor. This refusal forces the parents to somehow persuade their son to cooperate. However, there are many ways to try to persuade a child. The parents choose a gentle request (line 5). This is understandable, because during the last few years the *child-centred ideal* has been emphasised in public discussions by experts in education and psychology. When a researcher recognises the gentle tone of voice and a way parents give the son an opportunity to tell his side of the story, he/she might conclude that the attitudes of the parents are child centred and that the attitude explains what happens. After this finding it would be relevant, from the point of view of traditional attitude research, to study what proportion of Finnish parents share the child-centred attitude. However, when Timo says (line 6) that he does not want to get dressed, the parents somehow change their line of persuasion. The new tactic in the parents' reaction is to explain to the child why they need to hurry up (line 7). This turn is not contrary to the child-centred ideal, but it adds an *aspect of education* to the discussion.

When the parents still do not succeed, they have to choose either to try the same approach again or something else. A new aspect is the parents' attempt to persuade the child by promising him rewards if he collaborates (line 9). This turn can still be understood as child-centred, if we expect that the son is interested in the things promised to him. Nonetheless this 'rewarding' clearly differs from the previous gently explaining style by adding an *aspect of bargaining* in discussion. When Timo does not comply the parents again face a dilemma if they should continue their line or somehow change it. The parents choose to *threaten* their son (line 13) and later the father carries Timo to the car *by force* in order to get to the day-care centre². At the end of this

² The fact that the parent who forces his son to a car is the father is probably not a coincidence. Gender-bound activities may be present as taken-for-granted practices in many small choosing situations between parents. However, there is no space for discussing further the nature of gender institution.

stressful episode the parents try to restore a warm relationship with their child, but how successful this attempt is remains open in this hectic situation.

When looking at the episode as a whole, it becomes difficult for the analyst to categorise the parents according to their attitude, because the attitude has changed rapidly. It is a dilemma for the researcher to choose which one of the attitudes is factually true. In spite of the concept of attitude, it is more useful to conceptualise the turns of participants as *alternative practices*. Some of the practices follow the generally known ideal (or “discourse”) of child-centred parenting. However, speaking in a gentle tone of voice, asking the child to tell his side of the story, promising rewards and trying to restore a warm relationship with their child are different kinds of child-centred practices. And the ‘gentle’ practices are different from practices of bargaining. Nonetheless, they are not from a different planet, but represent different tactics in the *ideal of setting a child limits*, which is another generally known ideal, besides that of child centred thinking, in today’s Finnish culture.

In addition to this rather simple example, I want to introduce another, more complex case description. The second description is meant to illustrate more clearly the interpretational work needed in negotiations between parents and children.

Description 2: Negotiating about a quarrel

- 1 When the father of the Nieminen family comes home from work, there appears to be
- 2 an exceptionally difficult row between his 10-year-old daughter, Liisa, and his 6-year-
- 3 old son, Matti. The mother seems to be powerless to mitigate the aggression of her
- 4 elder child, Liisa.
- 5 The father puts the daughter gently but firmly on his knee and sits down on
- 6 the sofa, where the mother and son are already sitting.
- 7 Then he asks all the participants to tell one by one, what the trouble is about.
- 8 At first Liisa is not interested in telling anything, but the next moment she accepts on
- 9 condition that she can tell her version last, after her mother and brother. Both the
- 10 mother and Matti tell a similar version about the course of the struggle in which Liisa
- 11 has clearly been rough and unfair towards her little brother.
- 12 When Liisa has her turn, she unexpectedly outlines a longer time frame to her story
- 13 that involves the whole day.
- 14 The somewhat confused story also includes descriptions of her stressful school day and
- 15 mentioning that her male schoolmate had given her and many others unpleasant ‘snow
- 16 scrubs’.
- 17 Although Liisa does not include real apologies in her version of the fight with
- 18 her brother, she accepts that she blew “in one minor thing” that was unfair: she told her
- 19 little brother, who was looking forward to Christmas, that Father Christmas does not
- 20 exist.
- 21 By and by Liisa’s talk alleviates her bad temper and also the exceptionally difficult
- 22 row. Parents interpret this as a happy enough ending of the tense episode and they
- 23 change the topic.

As in the first case description, the parents of the family face a difficult situation where a child does not obey. In the second case description the difficulty concerns a quarrel between children, and especially the aggressions of the elder child, Liisa. As the mother is powerless, the father who comes home from work tries to resolve the situation. He puts the daughter “gently but determined” on his knee (line 7). The combination of the two aspects, child-centred and setting limits, which were essential in the first case description, are now present in the tones of this non-verbal activity. Then the father asks all the participants to tell one by one, what the trouble is about. The practice of hearing everyone out also gives the children the opportunity to tell their respective sides of the story and negotiate how to make sense of what has happened. Thus negotiating agreements does not only apply to meanings, agreeing or disagreeing about views, but also to how they are discussed, which *interaction frame* is chosen. The discussion about interaction frame starts with the father’s suggestion (about telling their versions one by one) and continues when the daughter, Liisa, tells that she wants to be the last to give her version in this sequence (lines 8-9).

The interaction frame that organises the order of speaking enables the daughter to produce a version of the problem very differently from the others. This she does by making the *time frame* of her narrative longer than the actual quarrel. Her story includes descriptions about her stressful school day and something that could possibly be heard as bullying at school. This narrative makes it problematic for the parents to interpret their daughter’s difficulties at school. They have to decide whether to take this description as a superficial excuse for her aggression at home or as a sign of serious bullying at school that should be dealt with efficiently. At least the parents choose to listen to the story although it appears to be somewhat confused. When Liisa’s audience keep on listening, she develops her story to include some concession about being unfair towards her brother “in one minor thing”: she claimed that Father Christmas does not exist. Depending on Liisa’s explanation and the assumptions about the meaning of Christmas for the children (and the family as a whole) the parents have to decide if the explanations are good enough, and if they need further discussion. At the end of episode the parents choose to interpret the situation as a happy enough ending and they change the topic. (In Suoninen 2008 I analyse further how the family later continues discussing the topic of possible bullying at school).

Methodological implications: How to get to the essence of parent-child interaction

Keeping in mind the previous illustrations, it is possible to outline some general guidelines for discursive case study analysis.

1) From a static picture to *processes*

A speaker may seem to have a very firm attitude. When analysing family negotiations, the most interesting instances may be those in which participants appears to 'choose' another attitude. The reasons or impulses for the changes are likely to be found (only) in the course of actual interaction process.

2) From individuals to *practices*

In order to make sense of interaction processes it is more useful to analyse practices or activities than to adhere to individualistic qualities like attitudes.

3) From researcher's interpretations to *participant's interpretations*

A meaning of an utterance by a family member may appear obvious to the researcher. The more important interpretation is that of other participant(s) in the actual interaction situation.

4) From explicit speech to *subtle communication*

In addition to the choice of words, the tones of voice and meaningful activities are an important part of parent-child communication. Thus methods must be detailed enough to recognise these.

5) From macro-level analysis to the details of *micro landscapes*

There is no guaranteed way to recognise the co-presence of society or culture (ideals / discourses) in actual family talk. The researcher interested in cultural/societal discourses has to interpret how the turns by participants make sense on different cultural levels and at a certain point in time, how far their utterances and practices resonate with public discourses or ideologies. The analysis of 'micro landscapes' of family interaction is also a way to study cultural discourses and institutions (educational institution and family institution), how they are actualised in practice at one essential (unless not the only) stage.

6) From what is common to *what is possible*

Statistical generalisations and correlations about family interaction are not enough, if we try to understand completely the processes between parents and children. The surprising turns and creativity of the participants (e.g. in problem solving) are also an interesting part of the interaction processes. The number of open discussions and negotiations has probably increased because of the historically new child-centred ideals. On the other hand, the practices of local family culture are also resources for later interaction episodes. Thus the interesting task for a researcher is to interpret how parents and children combine as their resources the macro level discourses and practices of their actual family culture.

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How to study early triangulation in an adult person's psychoanalytic process using written notes?

Mirja Malmberg

My study has its origins in psychoanalysis and dynamic psychotherapy. This article focuses on the qualitative research methodological problems and challenges I am confronting in my psychoanalytic case study research process. The expression “the missing methods” describes my research work in two perspectives: to find a phenomenon and then create a method to study it -so I have been in unknown waters all the time.

It is very important to bring together clinicians and researchers who share an interest in siblings. (Boyer & Dunn 1992, 155). Recently, Coles (2003, 2006) and Mitchell (2000, 2003) have reviewed the psychoanalytic literature on the sibling relationship perspective and indicated the neglected theme compared to the vertical theme. There has been very little research regarding the issues of siblinghood despite its importance and universality. Sibling relationships are easily left aside or under the parent-child-triad in spite of its great importance as a health advancing or arresting factor in development. There is a gap in psychoanalytic sibling research compared to studies of independent and dependent variables used to study the quality of sibling relationships (Sanders 2004, 55-81). What may be true sometimes is not necessarily true all the time.

There are very few studies which are focused on individual, deep and long lasting follow up studies, especially in the area of psychoanalysis and psychotherapy, because the main interest has been on the vertical dimension. I have, however, noticed in my own clinical work the importance of working through different kinds of triangular relationships and especially the importance of siblings. The theoretical starting point of my paper is to illustrate sibling rivalry in early triangulation, the so-called madonna constellation.

Contemporary research is concentrated with an emphasis on meaning. There are a growing interest in the cognitive and emotional interpretation of sibling reality by the

child. To hear the voice of sibling with his/her own words and narrative. It is the very essence of psychotherapy to reconnect fossilized and “frozen” meanings to actual and past experiences in order to allow them to become less distorted. Clinicians can be a source of help and inspiration in unravelling the dynamics of these processes (Boyer & Dunn 1992, 155). My study involved a detailed and systematic approach to 4 cases and my aim was to get inside the patient’s sibling experience and her/his early sibling-mother position. With the aid of my case-studies I illustrate how the feelings and ways of relating from the early madonna constellation can be reflected in the important emotional relationships in an adult’s life.

Madonna constellation – how I understand it

The theoretical starting point of my paper is to illustrate the sibling rivalry in early triangulation, the so-called madonna constellation, which consists of a triad between the mother and two siblings. The beginning of this experience includes the older child’s rivalry, envy and jealousy towards the younger child in the mother’s lap. The madonna constellation refers to a triad which includes a dyad, too. The mother and a baby, to which the older child is in a rival position. *Ernest Abelin* (1971) has called it the madonna constellation, to make a distinction between the primal constellations, in other words mother-father-child triad. Abelin thinks that the madonna constellation (or its derivatives) can represent an even more universal experience than the primal constellation, however, this question, whether the madonna constellation represents a more universal experience than the primal constellation has received little attention although siblings are real objects in a child’s life.

I use the word madonna constellation because I think that it is an appropriate expression for the phenomenon in my research. Even the name directs attention to the older child’s observation of the other child in the mother’s lap. In a research setting I think that the advantage of the word madonna constellation is its diversity, because it gives the possibility to change a viewpoint according to whose feelings and experiences you are referring to. The viewpoint can change: the older child, the younger child, mother or father. The constellation includes the whole family situation and emotional atmosphere of the time when the sibling was born, to which the child can situate himself in many different ways.

Madonna constellation in the mirror and shadow of written notes

My research challenge is to illustrate my patients' inner narratives or self-narratives about sibling rivalry in early triangulation, the so-called madonna constellation, which consists of a triad between the mother and two siblings. How to later study early triangulation in an adult persons' psychoanalytic process using written notes, when you are using natural treatment material which is collected during my patients' psychotherapy process without a direct research purpose. In essence, how to get to grips with or find the early triangulation and its representations in an adult person's life? How to cope with the question, how to recognise and identify strands of narrative which connect, either directly or indirectly, to madonna constellation issues, out of the whole plethora of issues brought up in the psychotherapy process, and then apply these verbal indicators onto the written page?

Narrative approach to psychotherapy

Narrative, storytelling, psychoanalysis and the psychotherapy process can be seen somehow parallel in research. Narratologia means to give an own voice to one's research object. Sibling relationships, being varied and multifaceted are easily left aside in psychoanalytic theory and discussion and in psychoanalytical research, perhaps because of the methodological difficulties in finding ways to undertake that research and give individual shape to sibling cases despite the importance of sibling experience as a health advancing or arresting factor in development.

Over recent years, the narrative turn in philosophy and social sciences has had an important impact on the field of qualitative psychotherapy research. Can the concept of the narrative and storytelling i.e. finding words and meanings to one's own experiences in the transference relationship to the psychotherapist be paralled to psychoanalysis and the psychotherapy process? Is it possible to use qualitative research methods and hermeneutic queries for the written material afterwards? Although it may disappoint clinicians that research does not provide them with clear and prevailing assistance in the observing, categorization and analysing of sibling-related issues and problems, however you are more and more interested to undertake scientific research in psychoanalysis using commonly accepted scientific research methods.

My research aim is to illustrate my patients' inner narratives or self-narratives about sibling rivalry in early triangulation, between the mother and two siblings. In essence, how to get to grips with or find the early triangulation in an adult person's life? I have chosen to give special attention to circumstances, issues and themes, where the protagonist thinks of his own relation to his sibling, how does he/she take his/her position to other people and how does he/she experience his sibling-parent triad, when collecting material from individual cases, and then coding and analysing and writing theme questions for the material.

I do not separate narrative / storytelling, because in my research the main point is that you tell something to another person, to whom you are in a meaningful and emotional relationship. It is change, transformation and process, which are important in narrative storytelling. Psychoanalysis/ psychotherapy (but not so intensive a process) is one kind of deep interview, which is characterized by much space, open questions, or no questions at all, only the possibility to tell what comes to one's mind - and then the therapist can explore deeper with questions on the theme. The main difference is the resistance process, which you must accept to get deeper in that process of telling something to another person. The therapist can help you in this process.

You can really parallel the psychotherapy process to some kind of special long-lasting deep interview process. During many therapy/analysis hours you can tell and find your own narrative. The narrative is a live, deepening process during which your story about your sibling becomes more exact. By remembering and understanding your feelings and motives, your way of reacting and being in relationship, helps you get self-insight which transforms you. You can remember one aspect and later on another aspect about your relationship to your sibling. During that process your narrative/story becomes more profound and understanding yourself and the other person/sibling changes you. So your relationship to your sibling can alter during the psychotherapy process. I think that with a therapist it is possible to reconstruct your background and become free of its emotional burdens.

Different levels to create and analyse the written notes

When creating material in psychoanalytic process I had only a treatment interest. On the second stage doing research work with this same material I have different

motives: interest from both a treatment point of view and a research perspective. From a research perspective the challenge is that the material was gathered and collected in natural and real situations; it was not planned to research this material from the outset. Taking notes has a function within my post-session deliberations and they serve the treatment interest. Afterward I can use that same material as research material. What does it mean to investigate the material which you have self created in the transference relationship with your patient? The problem is: The material which the analyst can possibly remember is not only dependent upon the memory function alone, but also that which you are able to understand and transform to the spoken word and into text, that is those thoughts, which arise in and from the form of a written narrative. Here the written documents are represented as a stage in the analyst's mental setting.

My method was a psychoanalytic-hermeneutic in creating material in the psychotherapy process by listening and openly approaching the spoken material of patients and afterwards, in the second stage, researching this same written material with open-mindedness and a lack of prejudice. What kind of methodological problems and epistemological problems are connected to collecting written material about my written notes of patient's psychotherapy? How to transform speech to text in psychotherapy? How to conceptualise the different stages through which patient's spoken material, (as a stage in the analyst's mental setting, later on the written material), has gone through before it is represented hermeneutically in the form of a document and then interpreting and finding the meanings it holds?

With the aim of a pilot-study and by systematically studying individual madonna constellation narratives (cases) I try to find one methodological way to study it and construct their madonna constellation psychology. To return to the pilot-study as a methodological and theoretical model I try to find different research dimensions, which could illustrate and construct madonna constellation problems in early triangulation. My text material consisted of written documents I analysed in detail using the principles of Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This approach and method facilitate thinking about descriptive material and helps to generate themes and hypothesis. My way of analysing and describing material and developing the research method was, however, situated between material-based and theory-based analysis (Tuomi & Sarajarvi 2002). The Grounded theory was used to generate themes

within an individual case for developing research questions to investigate individual cases and developing a research methodology for studying the overall madonna constellation case and for a comparison of the predominant themes between cases. Systematically the four cases of written text were studied, emerging themes noted and earlier readings and cases re-evaluated in the light of developing understanding.

My challenge was how to write a combined theme analysis and report of model narratives and the different possibilities of writing a psychotherapy case.

Research-ethical questions in the analysis of various kinds of written materials

One problem with studying your patients is one of how to use and preserve confidentiality with patient material for research purposes. My research policy has been to not mention names and places and other material which can be recognized. When writing the case, I try to alter the text in some important aspects so that it is impossible to recognize the person in question at all.

My own emotional barriers disappeared and doing research work was easier when I realised the fact that writing afterwards about the case happens on a quite different level and distance compared to the time period when the patient was in my treatment. In psychoanalytic research a tradition of follow-up questions about treatment are absent. What does it mean if you give attention to this reality? What does this tradition of putting aside an important reality aspect of it mean or are there grounds for it?

Conclusions

My challenge of the madonna constellation study was how to carry material, develop a method and write narratives from written notes and finally how to write cases from the material so that a reader can draw his/her own conclusions about the phenomena and elaborate on it. With an “ordinary” interview, the researcher only obtains answers to his/her questions that the interviewee feels are correct at that particular time. In effect, a “snapshot” of information. However, using the long-term psychoanalytic process, one can obtain answers to the same questions in many different “photo opportunities” along the time line, and be aware of intervening changes. In effect, a videotape of information. Also the information may well come from different layers, giving a fuller picture than

the one- dimensional “snapshot”.

It is really possible catch and find the phenomena using written natural material for research purposes. You can use your usual working tool, written notes to study psychoanalysis. The text, although not a verbatim recording is a recollection of the content of psychotherapy material after therapy sessions. The exactness of verbatim coding is compensated for by the rich and many-sided material and repeating themes, because the case material is, however, created during many therapy hours and over many years. It can be compared to a deep interview without being an actual interview. The important sibling dynamic and its meaning have from time to time appeared for working through and elaborating upon. The long treatment time and close relationship to the therapist, the many-sided working through process is compensated with what is possible to understand, remember and create in a documented form. I claim that it is extremely valid to use the psychoanalytic process to create material for research work. It is dependent on the mind set of the analyst which can vary during the treatment process but it is very big issue to have the time to create and then collect the material for scientific purpose.

Regarding research ethics, it is important to get permission to use to scientific proposals and to use means to guard the patient. Meeting the patients afterwards gives an extra validation for discussion about the meaning of their sibling relationship. During the research process and meeting my former patients I found one different way of doing research: I found a projective method of studying the madonna constellation, that is projective pictures, which are combined to the theme. And triangulation is re-enforced if you allow the former patient read the material.

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Studying children and social capital: From mixed (up) methods to methodological narration

Riikka Korkiamäki

The beginning: Introduction

This article has to do with a bunch of complicated concepts. *Social capital*, *children*, as well as *methods* are all concepts that have several and even contradictory meanings depending on the paradigmatic and practical discussion the writer or speaker is attached to. Social capital, for example, can be seen as an asset or a drawback, a cause or consequence, an individual or communal attribute of social relationships and networks. Children, on the other hand, are objective targets or active agents, on their way to adulthood or valuable on their own. The age distribution, the role and position, and the contextual environment of children and childhood vary according to different studies and different researchers, not even mentioning the public debate and everyday discussion. In this paper, my focus is on various scientific standpoints (see Pels 1996) that are used when studying children and social capital, and on the way the methods and methodologies construct the essence of research subject.

The presuppositions built in methodological choices guide not only the way the data is handled but also the results and the consequences of the research. According to Sven Mørch (2005: 37), often “the theoretical or methodological perspectives define the phenomenon instead of the phenomenon determining the theory and methods”. This is something to acknowledge with all research, but it especially becomes an issue when talking about studies where multiple methods are used.

The application of multiple methods is often passed only by short comments of “changing the methods” or “shifting the methodology” from one to another part of the study. It is also common to refer to the use of “mixed methods” without elaborating the grounds or consequences of each method used. (See Brannen 2005: 175.) This has often led to completed research reports where the methodology is contradictory and the methods are more “mixed-up” than consistent. In this article, my purpose is to tangle

with mixing the various methods in one research. I will go through the three types of data that I am using in my study – “theoretical”, quantitative and qualitative datasets – from two different angles. Firstly, I will look at the different presumptions I have to face with each data and secondly, I am trying to find a way to “put it all together” in a narrative way to form a logical and consequential picture of both the subject under study and my ongoing research process.

Why multiple methods?

The background of my study lies in the observation that social capital has become an increasingly popular scientific and political term when talking about children’s and young people’s wellbeing. The concept has been used as a foundation or a goal for several policy initiatives (e.g. Hyvää työtä 2005; Mustonen & Pulkkinen 2003; see also Iisakka 2006; The Finnish Children and Youth Foundation 2006), but the comprehensive definitions of children’s social capital are often missing. In my study, I – in all ambition – want to find out what social capital of children is all about. However, as being such a broad and ambiguous phenomenon, it would be impossible to catch all the conceivable dimensions of social capital in one research. Therefore, I have chosen the children’s perspective as my research question: how does social capital appear from the children’s point of view?

My research project has two divergent aims. The first one is to formulate an overall picture of children’s and young people’s social capital. As entering the research process I started out by exploring the pre-written data, the scientific articles about children’s and young people’s social capital. This systematic theoretical analysis of 31 empiric articles led to wonder about children’s (more or less missing) position in social capital discourse (Ellonen & Korkiamäki 2006; Korkiamäki & Ellonen 2008). At the same time, I participated in collecting a survey data about issues related to adolescents’ social capital. The data was gathered from 3131 9th graders (15–16 yrs old) at 39 Finnish high schools and it included children’s perceptions about their social networks, social support, social control and wellbeing (see Kääriäinen et al. 2005). As I also wanted to obtain children’s freely produced information about their social networks and relationships and about resources and weaknesses in these relationships, I interviewed 29 and got 118 essays and 4 diaries from 14–16 years old Finnish school children.

The multiple datasets allow me to explore children's social capital from different angles. Through theoretical data I got an idea of what other researchers thought as important aspects of social capital in childhood, and the questionnaire data informed about children's perceptions of the theory-based elements of social capital. In addition, the qualitative data provides me with children's voice that could involve even unknown qualities of their social capital. Altogether, mixing the methods helps me in gaining a multidimensional picture of the phenomenon (cf. May 2007).

The second goal of my research has to do with knowledge production. I want to find out how the pictures of children's social life and social processes differ depending on the data and methods. Is children's social capital the same as described by researchers as it is as illustrated by children themselves? Does the questionnaire data bring in unlike information than the interviews and children's writings? A multimethodological approach provides me with an opportunity to reflect on the possibly differing constructions of children's social capital caused by various research methods and methodologies. It can be well assumed that the theoretical, the quantitative and the qualitative datasets are informative about different aspects and produce dissimilar images of children's social capital. But would the three sets of information be compatible, or would the results turn out as a confusing mix-up of various sources of information? In the following, I will briefly look at the resultants of diverse methodological choices and standpoints in my research and, then, try to find a way to unite these differences in a coherent manner.

The separating: multiple data and its consequences

The child research, as well as research on social capital, can be viewed as expressions of certain scientific paradigm through which they study the social world. Children have been studied by both quantitative and qualitative means and looked through positivist, realist as well as constructionist lenses. In social capital research, the quantitative tradition is dominant, and only recently more qualitative studies have been established on children and social capital (see Rantalaiho & Teige 2006).

Quantitative and qualitative research are often presented as opposite to each others, but there has been an increasing amount of arguments in favor of ignoring the division and seeing the two in convergence. (Brannen 2005: 173.) A recent "trend" has also

been to perceive methodological choices as pragmatic rather than paradigmatic (e.g. Bryman 2004). However, the scientific standpoints bear consequences that are disparate in relation to the roles and positions of the researcher, research subject and the data. Whether this is seen as “the case for separation” or “the case for convergence” (Brannen 2005: 173), it is something to call into consideration.

In my study, the survey questionnaire can be seen as representing the quantitative research tradition, and the interviews and essays as typical forms of qualitative data collection. The third dimension is formed by the “theoretical data”, i.e. selected research articles on the subject. This data can be viewed from the viewpoint of the articles in the data (how they study children’s social capital) or from the viewpoint of the secondary critical reader, namely myself (how I see the articles presenting children’s social capital). In the table 1 (see next page), each data is viewed from the perspective of ontological and epistemological standpoints, the role of theory in the research process, the position of the researcher and the research subjects (children), and the aims and the focus of the research¹. This distinction is naturally simplistic. Neither quantitative, qualitative nor theoretical research data can be seen as plain categories. Each methodological category involves many variations of research methods and ways of understanding the research subject and the world behind it (Puuronen 2005: 18). Categories are also overlapping, and it is common for a research process to involve features of both qualitative and quantitative methodology (Brannen 2005; Bryman 2004). Also, theoretical investigation, when seen as a literature review of former studies in the field, is a natural part of each research process. Thus, the purpose of making the distinction between methodological categorizations here is to highlight the meaning of each dataset in my study.

The authors of the articles I went through as my theoretical data did not stop to elaborate their understanding of reality (ontology) or knowledge (epistemology). Therefore the data appeared as realist and objectivist, implying that the observations of children’s social world were unambiguous and the results independent of researcher’s intervention. The researcher’s role was not deliberated, and the studies were usually theory-driven in a way that the traditional theories of social capital or parts of them

¹ The data sets differ according to many other dimensions of research as well, such as their values, ideals and practical considerations like analysis methods and forms of arguing and reporting (see Bryman 2004:11-23; Guba & Lincoln 2003; Puuronen 2005:19-20).

were seen as a hypothesis that was tested in the context of childhood. Children were seen as objects of adult actions, or their social capital was measured through their parents' activities. Social capital was either a cause or a consequence of socialization outcomes in childhood. (See Ellonen & Korkiamäki 2006; Korkiamäki & Ellonen 2008.) Instead, for me as a reviewer of these articles (the second-hand interpretation), the data appeared as research realities constructed by subjective interpretations of each author. I took the social capital theories and the theorizations made by the authors as a target of investigation and looked at them from the viewpoint of childhood and youth studies (ibid). I felt more or less like an advocate whose job was to search and criticize social capital from a child's point of view. However, children themselves were not in any way present in this part of the study, whereupon my investigation remained detached from children's point of view, as well.

TABLE 1: Datasets and their features

Data	Theoretical		Questionnaire	Qualitative
	Articles	Second-hand interpretation		
Ontology	Realist / realism	Constructed realities	Realist realism	Relativism, locally and socially constructed realities
Epistemology	Objective	Subjective	Subjective, but whose subjectivity?	Intersubjective
Theory	Hypothesis	Theory as data	Determining starting point	Loose starting point
Researcher	Invisible	An advocate	An academic subject	Active participant
The children	Objects / targets	Non-existent	Representatives, knowledgeable agents	Active agents in producing information and constructing knowledge
Aims	Explanation	Familiarizing, critique	Describing, explaining	Understanding, de-/reconstruction
Research question / subject	How does children's social capital appear in academic research? What are the sources, forms and effects of social capital expected to be like?		How much and what kind of social support, control and trust do school, family, friends and neighborhood produce? Does this have an effect to children's well-being?	What sources and forms of social capital are meaningful to children and how? How do children build up, use and maintain social capital in their local communities?

The construction of the questionnaire started out by studying the theories and applications of social capital in social science research. The operationalizations of social capital in our questionnaire were derived from research literature. This can be seen as a restriction to the knowledge received. Although children were perceived as

knowledgeable agents and their perceptions were highly valued, their subjectivity was narrowed down to pre-given choices (cf. Helavirta 2007). Therefore it is legitimate to wonder, who the real subject of this data is. In interpreting and reporting the data, the children come out as a representative group of their fellow Finnish school children even if the local contexts of producing the data were well elaborated. Also, the validity and “truthfulness” of the results are ultimately valued by the proper use of scientific methods. Thus the expertise is academic instead of owned by children. Nevertheless, children’s perceptions of certain (pre-given) aspects of social capital were attained in a form and extent that could not have been possible without conducting a survey and analyzing it through quantitative means (Korkiamäki, forthcoming). Also, some implications about the connections between children’s social capital and their wellbeing could be done by analyzing the questionnaire data (e.g. Ellonen et al. 2007).

The need for qualitative data, i.e. thematic interviews and children’s writings, arouse partly from the limitations of theoretical and questionnaire data. I wanted to obtain children’s stories about their social environments to understand what sources and forms of social capital are meaningful to children and why. The goal was to stay open to children’s own conceptualizations of their “social capital”, namely resources but also disadvantages of local communities surrounding them. A key component of my ethnomethodically oriented analysis is to conceive children as active agents who intersubjectively negotiate the contents of social capital in their local and cultural communities.

Even then, in a need to know what to look from the data, also the qualitative data is bound with the theory as well as my mundane preconceptions: although I take theory only as a loose starting point in pre-thinking the interview or essay themes, and the children can produce quite freely about their social relations, my analysis and interpretations – however data-driven the intensions are – originate from earlier formulations of what social capital supposedly is. Still, being open about my unavoidable role also in producing the data, makes me an active participant of the research while the subjectivity remains with the children.

The combining: research process as methodological narration

The separation of the datasets above was based in the notion that different

paradigms behind each research method hold different epistemological assumptions, belong to different research cultures and have different research biographies (Brannen 1992; 2005: 173). However, methodological investigations have indicated that there are more overlaps than differences between for example qualitative and quantitative research traditions (Brannen 2005; Bryman 2004; Hammersley 1992). Thus the use of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies is strongly suggested, and the advantages of mixing methods are seen more clearly than the risk of disposing the methodological reflection (ibid).

In my study, the mixed methods are especially beneficial from the viewpoint of complementarity. Each dataset addresses a different aspect of children's social capital thus offering a better understanding of the complexity of the phenomenon (cf. May, 2007). Hence, I am not using the multiple data as a means of validating each other (triangulation) but to expand the scope of the research, its design and implementation (see Hammond 2005). Moreover, the eventual goal of mixing the methods could be seen as what Greene, Caracelli and Graham (1989) called initiation: the reconciliation of apparently contradictory findings to develop new ways of rethinking the research subject (see Hammond 2005). According to Hammond's (2005: 244-245) experience, this kind of creative process of discovering new perspectives could not have happened without the stimulation of conflicting datasets.

Bryman (2004) suggests that competing methodological presuppositions are a technical question which is to be dealt with practically. This can mean for example the phasing of a research process in a way that each phase has a particular aim and addresses different research questions and concerns (Brannen 2005: 178). According to Silverman (2000: 42-43), it is often convenient to study the phenomenon at more general level in the beginning, but this kind of investigation alone is seldom interesting. In my study, the scope of the research decreased from international theoretical data, through national survey data, to local interview and essay data. The survey therefore provided contextual data for the qualitative datasets (cf. Brannen 2005: 178). This is something that is also requested by "contextual constructionists", who underline the importance of systematic data-driven analysis but stress also the dialogue between local and situational findings and a wider empiric and theoretical observations (see Holstein & Miller 1993; Roivainen 1999).

In the beginning of this paper I stated that my goal was a logical and consequential research – despite of mixing the methods. In my mind, the plot of the study can be found in what I am calling a “methodological narration”. The sequential storyline results from the notion that the latter phases of research are founded on the critique or deficiencies of the former ones (see figure below).

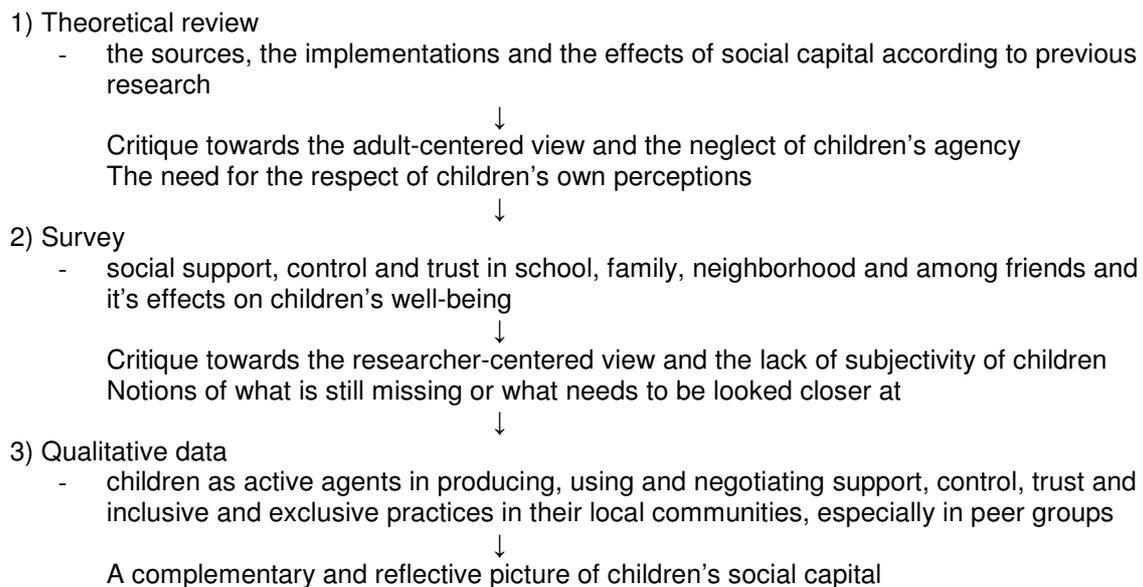


FIGURE 1: The methodological narration

The end: Conclusion

In a fresh way of looking at narrative research Jane Elliot (2005) presents narrative methods as something both qualitatively and quantitatively oriented researchers can profit of. She turns away from the quantitative–qualitative divide and argues that all kinds of research data can be best analyzed if seen in narrative terms (ibid). Although I have not utilized narrative methodology in analyzing the data of my study, I take Elliot’s statement of “narrative mix” as a guideline for “putting it all together”. The separate parts of my study form a narration, which is narrative both by the form (the beginning, the middle and the end) and the content (the story of critiques, questions and answers) (cf. Hyvärinen 2007). This is something that is expected as the institutional and conventional practices of academic research, as well as anticipated by increasing external political and practical demands for research (Brannen 2007). Perhaps this is not

a “cultural script” – as narrative researchers could state (see e.g. Clandinin 2007; Hyvärinen et al. 1998) – of a research report. But maybe just that is why this story was worth telling about.

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Measuring the effect of the Holistic Pediatric Rehabilitation Programme for Children with Acquired Brain Injury (HOPE) on functioning and wellbeing of the children with acquired brain injury and their families

Mari Kerminen

Introduction

Traumatic brain injury (TBI) is the leading cause of death and long-term disability in children of all ages. In Finland the yearly number of new moderate or severe traumatic brain injuries among children is approximately 60. The number of mild injuries could be ten times bigger. Although the clinical protocols for medical care in acute phases after brain injury in children are well-established, the literature describing the models of outpatient care and rehabilitation is scarce, and the consequences of TBI in children often remain poorly understood within the community.

The consequences of brain injury in children usually remain poorly understood within the community. Often reported late outcomes of acquired brain injury are intellectual (e.g. difficulties in learning, attention, executive functions and information processing) and social sequelae (personality changes, emotion regulation skills, behaviour problems). Most children with moderate or severe brain injury require lifelong medical involvement and rehabilitation. The child and his/her family need support in each new developmental transition. Sudden regression in child's development due to accident or sickness increases parental distress and affects into family dynamics and functioning. Children suffering from brain injury are more dependent on a positive and supportive family environment than children without injury. Parental distress correlates positively to the recovery process of the child. On the other hand, family instability is likely to exacerbate any existing behavioural, emotional or social difficulties in children. It has been shown that well conceived family centred interventions can improve family resilience and problem-solving ability, thereby also improving the child's outcome.

The goals for the outpatient rehabilitation of the brain-injured child and his/ her family are to foster independence in daily living skills and to facilitate community re-

integration. Participating in everyday life is an important goal in brain injury rehabilitation, and due to that, the brain injured child and his/ her family benefit more from integrated community-based rehabilitation models than traditional center-based or skill-specific approaches.

Holistic Pediatric Rehabilitation Programme for Brain Injured Children (HOPE) is an outpatient rehabilitation program for brain-injured children and their families. The program consists of four intensive rehabilitation periods and regular network co-operation. The goals of the program are to increase the child's and his/her family's functioning and quality of life along with increasing collaboration with local authorities. Rehabilitation perspective is client-centered and emphasises resources, strengths and interaction within a family. HOPE is the only rehabilitation program in Finland in which the whole family participates and a regular collaboration with school or day care and follow-up are included. There are no former studies of evaluation of outcome following participation into the HOPE program.

The focus of the study

Current literature is lacking studies of measurement of functional outcome of TBI in children. In evaluating the functional rehabilitation outcome, the traditional evidence-based practise is not either possible or practical. More ecologically relevant methods are needed. There are only handful of researches in literature to date, which evaluate the effectiveness of rehabilitation from the perspective of survival in everyday activities and participation. The traditional neuropsychological assessments are often lacking the ecological validity when e.g. executive skills are being considered, and they only correlate slightly to parents' or teacher's evaluation of the behaviour problems of the children manifested in everyday life.

The purpose of the study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the HOPE program with regard to the functioning and wellbeing of the brain injured children and their families, the distress experienced by their parents and improvement of the children's executive skills during the rehabilitation. Additionally the family centeredness of the program is evaluated by the parents.

Study group and method

The study group consists of 20 families participating in to the HOPE program during the years 2005-2008. The ages of the children vary between 4 and 17 years. The types of injuries in children are TBI due to a car accident or falling, head tumour, anoxic brain injury, stroke, encephalitis (caused by virus or bacteria) and forms of epilepsy.

The data is gathered from different sources prior and posterior to rehabilitation process. The accurate background information is gathered in the beginning of the rehabilitation process (e.g. age of the child, gender, date of birth, diagnosis, the date of accident, former and current therapies acquired, school or day care arrangements, debriefing provided). In choosing the study methods the ecological validity of the assessment tools and coping in everyday activities are emphasised.

The basic neuropsychological status of the child is evaluated using traditional neuropsychological tests. However, according to current knowledge traditional neuropsychological measures of executive functions demonstrate only modest association with parental ratings of child's executive skills in every-day activities. Therefore, the executive skills of the child are additionally evaluated with Behaviour Rating Inventory of Executive Function (BRIEF) and Five to fifteen (VIIVI) questionnaires by the parents and teacher of the child. BRIEF and VIIVI are standardizes questionnaires providing information about the nature and extent of executive function deficits and other developmental problems displayed by child in his/her natural surrounding in everyday- life.

Parental distress over behaviour problems of the child is measured with Head Injury Behaviour Scale (HIBS) questionnaire. Parents' experience of the family centeredness of the rehabilitation process is measured with Measurement of the Process of Care (MPOC) questionnaire.

The procedure

The first measurement occurs in the beginning of the HOPE program and second measurement 6 months after last follow-up. In between the measurements the families are participating into the HOPE program.

Statistical analyzes

In analyzing the results, the means, standard deviations and p-values are examined and reported. In addition to that, the data requires further qualitative elaboration due to heterogeneity of the study group and relatively small sample size.

Results

First, according to the VIIV and BRIEF questionnaires filled by parents, children's executive and attention regulation skills enhanced during the HOPE program ($p = .014$). Second, according to HIBS questionnaires the parental distress caused by emotional and behavioural problems of the children decreased during the rehabilitation process (irritability, $p = .001$, impatience, $p = .033$, aggressive behaviour, $p = .041$).

Discussion

Assessing recovery in children is a complex process in general. Children are naturally changing and developing both before and after they are injured, including while they are receiving rehabilitative interventions. Improvement in certain skills alone is not sufficient indicator of recovery, because developmental expectations assume ongoing progress in abilities throughout childhood and adolescence. In determining whether a child has demonstrated recovery due to rehabilitation, the developmental factors and other intervening variables need to be considered. Therefore, in order to examine the effects of rehabilitation, information is required e.g. on normal child development and different injury mechanisms.

This study is facing several methodological challenges due to the heterogeneity of the study group. Age at the time of injury and the injury severity are strongly affecting recovery. In this study, the ages of the participants vary between 4 and 17 years. According to current knowledge, younger age at the time of injury is associated with more permanent and cumulative deficits. The injury severity is an additional critical predictor of the recovery. There are multiple intervening variables such as natural recovery and development occurring during the programme and other therapies and support received. These intervening variables can not be controlled.

In this study, the recovery of the executive skills of the children is merely

being evaluated by the parents and teachers. The further studies should also include self-evaluation of the children considering recovery from the deficits due to injury. Additionally the parental distress should be evaluated with multiple methods.

The study results need to be interpreted with caution. Children participating into the study are facing diverse developmental challenges and family situations at the time of evaluation. Due to that diversity, different aspects of the recovery process are emphasised during the HOPE program depending on the individual needs of the child and his/her family.

The statistical power of the study is moderate, due to relatively small sample size. When comparing the means of the first and second measurements, significant differences are apparent ($p < .05$). However, due to small sample size, the data needs to be examined descriptively in addition to statistical analyzes. The additional limitation of the study is lack of the control group. On the other hand, having a control group in a field of pediatric rehabilitation, would probably lead to serious ethical consequences in withholding treatments during the period which is crucial for recovery.

Evaluating the outcome of HOPE program is challenging due to diversity of the children and their families. There are multiple intervening variables, which can not be controlled. Additionally, contents of the rehabilitation process vary depending on the individual situation of a child and his/her family. However, studying the outcome and effectiveness of the rehabilitation is important at the perspective of developing the models of pediatric brain injury rehabilitation. Furthermore, financiers, e.g. insurance companies and The Social Insurance Institution (Kela) require information about the effectiveness of the rehabilitation.

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Juridification as a methodological concept

Sanna Koulu

Introduction

It is almost a truism these days that legislation needs to struggle to keep up with social change. Within the field attributed to family law, the changes within the last half of the twentieth century are close to unprecedented.

Taking into account these changing forms and changing meanings of family is a challenge for jurisprudence as well as legislative work – a challenge made more complex by the contemporary advances within social sciences. The traditional jurisprudence of doctrinal legal scholarship, of systemizing and interpreting legal norms, comes face to face with abrupt changes in the very central institutions within family law as well as new ways of conceptualizing those institutions.

This, then, is the challenge for traditional legal scholarship: how to relate to the developments in the social sciences? How to take into account the changing forms of the family?

A partial answer may be found in examining the concepts of e.g. ‘family’ and ‘child’, through which legal effects are connected to non-legal, socially constructed reality (Tuori 2002, 174). I posit in this paper that even within jurisprudence we should not ignore the non-legal dimension of these concepts, and the converse may hold true for the social sciences insofar as we want to understand the normative dimension of these institutions. Thus these sociolegal concepts have a two-fold nature that leads to a number of methodological challenges in combining qualitative and discursive viewpoints and methods with those of jurisprudence.

As a tool for addressing the methodological problems, I propose developing and studying the concept of juridification to examine the ways in which social phenomena are brought within the ambit of legal norms and assigned legal effects.

Socially constructed reality or legal concepts?

In this essay I focus on legally non-binding agreements concerning children's custody and right of access. These agreements are problematic from a legal point of view, and as such they offer us a starting point for examining the tensions between legal normativity and (the view of) reality as socially constructed. While the following example concerns only one type of agreement, similar issues arise also with regard to other kinds of agreements about children.

Let us take a hypothetical couple, Antti and Bertta, who live together with a 6-year-old daughter from Bertta's previous relationship, and a daughter of both Antti and Bertta's, aged three years. Both kids have been treated equally as part of the family. Now Antti and Bertta are separating, and they agree that both children will continue living with Bertta, and spend every other weekend with Antti.

Now – what is the meaning of this agreement especially regarding the older daughter? In legal terms, we can state that the agreement has no binding force since Antti is not the child's legal father and thus Antti and Bertta could not make agreements concerning her custody or right of access.

Let us assume that the older daughter's biological father Carl has been living abroad, and on returning to Finland, demands rights of access regarding his daughter. Now the picture becomes more complex, as we may need to weigh the arrangements of the child's right of access against the father's right to protection of family life according to e.g. the European Convention of Human Rights.

The central issue here can be treated as a legal, normative question about what legal effects this "lacking" agreement might have. However, in framing the question within the tradition of jurisprudence, we may end up in a dead end: if the agreement has no legal effects, is it then an agreement at all? Legal scholarship offers few tools for answering this follow-up question. Indeed, the question may be considered irrelevant and meaningless in the context of traditional jurisprudence. At the same time it is difficult for us to examine the legal construction and interpretation of the respective positions of Antti and Carl, since Antti's social fatherhood is not a legally distinct category.

Meanwhile, if we examine the situation within (broadly) the context of social sciences, the picture changes. It is clear that Antti and Bertta have entered into an arrangement about the custody and the visiting rights of their children, and that the family's life is shaped by this arrangement. The question of legal significance is peripheral in a way; the question may be better phrased in terms of how the relations and identities of the family and of the family members are negotiated, shaped and reproduced in the agreement.

How then can we study the legal effects of this agreement that may not be a legal agreement at all? And what methodological framework should we adopt for a fruitful examination?

Juridification as a concept

Theoretical challenges

While the hypothetical agreement I presented above may seem trivially simple, the legal issues are revealed as remarkably elusive. Within jurisprudence, such agreements may be construed as non-binding utterances or expressed wishes that might offer evidence of the children's best interests – a categorization that leads us directly to the mire of one of the most contested concepts of family law (Kurki-Suonio 1999, 1-2 and referred literature).

At the same time it is difficult to pin down any legal effects more concretely. The central challenge can be described also as a methodological one, since concrete answers are hard to reach without a precisely formulated research question supported by an appropriate theoretical framework.

Formulating the research question precisely proves challenging, when we try to outline the ontological and epistemological framework behind it. Doctrinal legal scholarship – the method at the core of the tradition of jurisprudence – is essentially positivist; its function is systemizing and interpreting norms against the background of objective reality. The premises in this kind of approach may not be compatible with those of relative, positionalist discursive methods (Niemi-Kiesiläinen & al 2007, 71-73).

Is a wider view possible?

Because of the ontological and epistemological conflicts involved, extending our understanding of the concepts of 'child' or 'family' across the border zone of the legal and the social may prove challenging. Treating the concepts as essentially legal may lead to a (deceptively) simple view at the cost of risking a deeper understanding of the complexities of legislating these fundamental family relations. However, transcending the legal brings us squarely back into the epistemological dilemma.

Is it even possible to carry out legal dogmatic research in which we attempt to acknowledge and address the many dimensions and challenges of these simple concepts? Or, conversely – is it possible to carry out research on agreements concerning children sensibly, if we do not make the attempt?

One way of answering this dilemma would be to use both methods and viewpoints within the same study. The research question might be essentially one of legal scholarship, while one part of the whole could involve a sociological study of the practices in the field. Including such background in a study may be of great value for studying "law in action" instead of "law in books", to use Roscoe Pound's concise phrase.

While it is certainly feasible to use the methods of legal and social sciences as separate but interlocking parts of the same study, I feel this approach may not always be satisfactory in addressing the more fundamental theoretical issues involved. The challenge in such work may lie in truly integrating the different parts of the study while staying true to the research traditions of each field, as simplifying the methods of both fields may lead to the results not satisfying either perspective. (Niemi-Kiesiläinen & al 2007, 72.) The positivism of legal scholarship may lie uneasy with the positivist approach of social sciences, and there may then be a danger of the social sciences being reduced to a mere review or description of a static, objective reality.

It may be worth examining, then, if the question of diverging viewpoints could be addressed more fruitfully by looking for a way to combine them. I propose that we could aim at this goal by looking at a concept that bridges the two viewpoints – a concept that includes both normativity and discursive reality as its two sides: that of juridification.

"Juridification" as a tool

While juridification is one of the recurring topics in today's social and legal contexts, the discussion often centers on the increases in legal regulation and recourse to the legal conflict-solving mechanisms. However, I would like to focus now on a slightly different aspect of it, by extending the concept to a more abstract, discursive level.

Juridification could then be understood as the process by which socially constructed phenomena are brought within the ambit of legal norms. In H.L.A. Hart's parlance, this process can be viewed from both outside and inside the legal sphere. It is at the same time an external question of how concepts are transferred from one discourse to another, in this case into the legal discourse, as well as an internal question of how those constructs are assigned legal effects. (Cf. McCrudden 2006, 633-637; Tuori 2002, 197-199.) The latter viewpoint is connected to the extensive discussion of the nature and validity of legal norms, since it is essentially a question of what does normativity mean – that is, where in the self-regulation of normativity do concepts get their binding force.

Family law as a problem area

The question of combining jurisprudential and social sciences viewpoints may be especially relevant within the field of family law. Family law as a field of law is of relatively recent formation, partly because the regulation of the family has tended to be e.g. religious or moral instead of legal. Family law regulates that field of social relations which has come to epitomize the private sphere, and is of course in itself a site for shaping and reproducing the distinction of the family and the market. (O'Donovan 1985, 2-4,7; Nousiainen 2001, 25-27, 45.) While family law has become to some extent liberalized and the social changes involved in the rise of the welfare state have certainly brought the distinction of public/private law under discussion (Nousiainen 2001, 34, 55), the divisions remain germane.

I would like to focus here on a distinction which is often taken for granted: that of status relations and contractual relations (cf. Schiratzki 1997, 39-42). We might characterize family law broadly as a field of law in which juridification happens mostly through status relations and official decision-making, while private law in general relies on nonobligatory legislation and the contractual framework.

Contract has been discussed in legal philosophy and legal theory as a source of law for the relation between the parties, and the notion of freedom of contract with its concepts of subjectivity and rationality may be said to be one of the very cornerstones of modern law (cf. O'Donovan 1985, 5; Nousiainen 2001, 41). The norms set out in a contract are also almost self-evidently legitimized by such basic axioms as "pacta sunt servanda".

Contract in this sense could be seen as a crucial instrument in the juridification of real life within the field of private law. With a contract the parties have the opportunity to select elements from outside the legal context and introduce them into it. A contract is, almost by definition, acknowledged by the sovereign state as one source of norms between the parties and awarded enforceability within the state's system of legal sanctions. Even when there are restrictions on this acknowledgement of contracts, such as that denying legal protection for unenforceable contracts such as e.g. gambling debts, the basic premise is that contract is a valid source of norms.

Family law presents us with a striking contrast. Contracts in general are given only limited legal significance, and there has been much research on how the special circumstances of family relations affect even general private law contracts when made between spouses. Instead many relevant norms have been tied into a person's status as e.g. betrothed, spouse, parent. The kind of status relations which are legally possible have been set out in legislation (cf. Nousiainen 2001, 42-43; Schiratzki 1997, 40), and may be shaped by certain official decisions such as court decision on adoption, but usually not by private agreements.

In other words we can say that within family law juridification is allowed primarily through legislative acts or official decision-making but only limitedly through private norm-making such as by contracts. When legislation sets out a category of 'father' and regulates the official actions which may establish legal fatherhood, it effectively transfers and translates the relationship into a legal context and determines the ways in which the relationship may commence in legal context. Thus we could say that the juridification takes place not with regard to a single element of the lived-in reality, but "wholesale", an entire relationship at a time.

This form of juridification may be seen as less flexible to changes in its area of effect than the contractual mechanisms in private law. At the same time, cultural and social

development have led to a decrease in the influence of other normative systems that have supported these status relations, such as religion or social norms. It may be postulated that this inflexibility and the lessening influence of supporting mechanisms has made room for an increasing reliance on and demand for contracts as juridifying and legitimizing tools also within family law. At the same time the flexibility brought on by the availability of agreements may be relevant for the acceptability and legitimacy of legislation. A parallel and interconnected process is the hypothesized changing nature and dispersal of law (Hunt & Wickham 1994, 56-58).

I believe this development is fundamental with regard to the questions of e.g. biological, legal and social parenthood which I brought up in the beginning of this essay.

Conclusions

The questions I have raised up in this essay are rather central to jurisprudence in general, and there may be relatively little that I could add to the on-going discussion of e.g. normativity, legal validity and the development of law as a social institution. However, I perceive definite possibilities in this point of view for the study of non-binding agreements especially within child law.

More specifically, this context could offer opportunities for examining the relations between the leading principles of child law, such as the best interests principle, and the doctrine of the sources of law as well as the regulation of agreements about e.g. custody and access. The doctrine of the sources of law might be fruitfully examined as the “doorkeeper” of jurisprudence. (cf. Niemi-Kiesiläinen & al 2007, 77-78; Tuori 2002, 167.)

Examining the agreements Antti and Bertta made in the beginning of this essay would then take place against this theoretical background. This might help us get beyond the casuistic level into the more general questions of how and when are these agreements awarded legal effects.

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Essay contest as the method of hearing children's voice

Kadi Ilves

Introduction

The question of treating (and punishing) children in Estonia is much debated in connection with the preparation of the country's new version of the Children's Protection Act. The Ministry of Social Affairs of Republic of Estonia wanting to involve children in the legislative process announced an essay contest for children for grades five through nine. Among pupils, the popular theme was *Punishment – a necessary upbringing method or violence?* The subjects of the analysis were the interpretative repertoires used in essays.

Theoretical framework

Jonathan Potter and Derek Edwards created the school of discursive psychology in the 1990-s as a branch of social psychology criticizing, and to challenge the opinions of mainstream cognitive psychology (Potter 2006, 2003, 2000, 1996a, 1996b; Edwards & Potter 2005; Potter & Molder 2005; Burr 2003; Potter & Edwards 1999). The main rationale for using interpretative repertoires is in the opinion of Vivien Burr (2003, 127) "*these repertoires enable people to justify particular versions of events, to excuse or validate their own behavior, to fend off criticism or otherwise allow them to maintain a credible stance in an interaction*". Essentially, repertoires are culture-specific sets of concepts that help the user to behave correctly by following standard customs.

Purpose and research questions

The main purpose of the research was to analyze the interpretative repertoire pupils used in their essays. The second purpose was to analyze the suitability of an essay contest for hearing children's voice.

Springing from my purposes was an attempt to answer the following questions:

- 1) What kind of interpretative repertoire do pupils use in their essays?
- 2) What is the choice of repertoire dependent upon?
- 3) What kind of suggestions can be made, on the basis of the analysis, to those who want to involve children in the future and listen to them?

Method

Sample

The data used originated from 151 essays from a contest for children from grades five through nine (ages 10-16). The sample consisted of essays written by pupils from schools having Estonian or Russian as language of teaching.

Method of analysis

For analyzing the essays, I used method of interpretative repertoire (Burr 2003; Edley 2001; Potter 1996a, 1996b) created by Jonathan Potter and Margaret Wetherell. The subject of the analysis was the content of the interpretative repertoires, as well as the grammatical and rhetorical means used in them. The purpose of the analysis was to describe content and users of the repertoires, also the purposes and interests for which they are used. The repertoires were ordered by using the logic of the essay writers:

- First, the repertoire of the concept of *upbringing*;
- Secondly, one of the concept of *punishment*;
- Thirdly, the repertoire of the topic of *violence against children*.

Main results

It turned out that within the repertoires characteristic of adult and children culture were represented. Prevalent were the adult repertoire themes: *The dream of every parent is to raise a proper citizen; Punishment is certainly a (very) important upbringing method; Good children, they grow without the rod*. As a result of the analysis, it became apparent that the opinions expressed in the essays represented the common concepts of Estonian society, and not so much the experience of children and opinions following those experiences. The fact that adult repertoires were dominant to repertoires of children draws attention to children's stake in writing the essays. While composing and

choosing the repertoires, children wanted to please the adults who were assessing the essays. In this, the performative function of the essays emerged.

The most important difference between borrowed and self-generated repertoires is the act binding them with real individual experiences, which also influences the language used. If repertoires are *alien*, then more *playfully* used concepts may appear. The children who wrote about personal experiences in their essays used subject matter easier and more proper for their ages. Also, it seemed they didn't try to convince the reader at any cost in the truthfulness of their opinions. In essays of children of different ages, different skills were utilized to express and make viewpoints convincing and influential. Girls from grade six and boys from grade nine exhibited good communication skills. Furthermore, all the pupils from schools having Russian as the teaching language also exhibited skills. The children's own repertoires were more hidden in the presented essays. Repertoires of children develop in their own cultures. The repertoire of children is different from that of adults in the use of language, especially in the absence of flamboyant rhetoric.

Conclusions

The contest wasn't successful in its main purpose of involving children in the legislative process and hearing their voice. The essays didn't represent the ideas of children, but instead the way children use and recreate the interpretative repertoire (used by adults) about raising and punishing children. What is certain is that the investigation of opinions shouldn't be in the form of a contest, because in this case the result is more important than the process and so determines the choice of means.

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Sensitive issue – vulnerable informants: Asking children and adolescents about sensitive issues on the Internet

Marja Holmila, Minna Ilva, Maritta Itäpuisto & Antti Järventausta

Introduction

Designing the data collection among children of substance abusing parents entails several problems. What are the ethical, technological and methodological challenges, opportunities and hindrances? Internet offers an opportunity in reaching this group of children and adolescents, and learning about their needs for support and care, and in their views of what could make a difference in their lives. The fact that children and adolescents are very familiar with Internet and use it in everyday life, and that there are special help-lines frequented by young people already available, offers one possibility. Also, web technology creates a private and anonymous setting for the respondents. However, compared to other forms of collecting data, designing web questionnaire brings about a new set of concerns. The paper discusses the methodological issues relevant in using a web-questionnaire.

Importance of studying children's own views

Most of the research on impacts of parents' alcohol use and drug problems has focused on looking how and to what extent the parents' alcohol and drug use affects the children's healthy growth, and to what extent the problems are transferred from one generation to the other. When earlier studies often concentrated in finding out to what extent alcoholism is inherited, the scope has later become wider, and links between parents' substance use and various children's problems such as difficulties in learning and academic achievements, social and behavioural problems during youth, and mental health problems have been studied. The results from large- scale epidemiological studies have shown that even if the parents' alcohol and drug problems are a very serious factor from the point of view of the child's wellbeing and future life, the effects on the children's future behaviour are complex and far from "black and white", and there is a lot of individual variation (Hurcom& al. 2000; Harter& Taylor 2000). This

has increased the hope and interest in interventions that could further help the children's lives.

The adult family members of alcohol and drug users has also been studied aiming to understand how the families experience the situation, what are their everyday-life like and how the family members cope in their difficult situation (Orford & al 2005; Peltoniemi 2005; Itäpuisto 2005; Holmila & Kantola 2003; Dube & al 2001, Wiseman 1991). The data have consisted of interviews, observations and material written by the respondents themselves. In spite of the cultural and other differences, these studies bring out a surprisingly similar picture. The family members experience stress, continuous worry over the misusing family member, threats towards family and home, challenges and demands of the situation (Orford & al 2005). These studies give information on how the outsiders could "bring help into the family system", or at least what kinds of help is wanted. Unfortunately the data is mostly limited to adults, and even if sometimes also teen-age children are among the respondents, their special situation is not looked at. Few studies so far have looked at how children here and now experience their parents' alcohol and drug use, what is the quality of their lives like, and how their rights as citizens are being realized.

Our study will ask what kinds of help the children themselves would find useful. The data is collected directly from the under-age family members of substance users. The study is still in its planning stage, and the instrument of web-based interviewing is being piloted.

Methodological challenges

Survey researchers are realizing that information on children's opinions, attitudes and behaviour should be collected directly from children. Official government agencies as well as market researchers nowadays approach children directly. However, relatively little is known about children and adolescents as respondents, and pretesting for this age group can be said to be a neglected issue (de Leeuw 2004, 409). Some researchers interested in interviewing adolescents' and young have paid attention to special features relevant in recruitment of children and presenting questions to them (Scott 1997). For instance, it is important to take into account the stages of cognitive development in different age-groups. It has also been claimed that children may be less

susceptible than adults to social desirability bias. Moreover, children's own ideas about social desirability are said to be heavily context dependent, so that the place of interviewing may have an influence on the way she/he answers. Also, the context may influence the way some concepts are understood. Young people are often unwilling to talk about embarrassing or socially undesirable behaviour. Conformity to peers and peer pressures are an important factor influencing responses. Also, questions presented to children have to be clear, as concrete and non-ambiguous as possible, and there should not be too many alternatives to choose from in a single question (de Leeuw 2004).

Children's motivation to give careful and truthful answers can also be a challenge. In this regards, the interviewer and the rapport between interviewer and child are crucial. A good relationship encourages more forthcoming responses, and the relationship can be a source of error if the child finds the interviewer intimidating or impatient. In general, from 11 years onwards, children are able to respond to standardized questionnaire instruments (Scott 1997).

Challenges in interviewing children and adolescents have some similarities with the challenges in interviewing adults. With children as respondents, the same problems can, however, be magnified, as a slight error in the questionnaire may have a larger impact than with the adults. It is recommended that questionnaires should be adopted to suit each age group of children. Pretesting questions for their suitability for each age group is also advisable (de Leeuw 2004).

Sometimes technical devices have been used to overcome the difficulties of presentation and design of questionnaire studies. In a British Household Panel Study 11-15-year-olds were interviewed for the first time in 1994. In order to insure the respondents' feel of confidentiality and privacy the researchers (Scott 1997) used so called "Walkman-method", that is the children heard the questions from a Walkman and replied by writing in a notebook. It had been noticed that sensitive issues like drug use and mental health could be studied using this approach.

Young people in New Zealand have been studied with the help of the M-CASI-method (Multimedia-computer -assisted questionnaire). Watson et al. (2001) studied the method with a post-pilot. 94 % of the 98 respondents of the piloting said that using the computer

made answering easier, but there was also critique.

In order to test the Walkman-method, the researchers used qualitative group interviewing and piloting in homes (Scott 1997). Watson et al (2001) conducted their focus-group interviews after the actual survey as post-pilot. Experiences of focus-group discussions were very positive, but do not substitute the formal pre-testing of the use of the questionnaire in conditions that can be repeated.

An additional common method in pre-testing is a method, where the person filling the questionnaire is asked to think loud as he/she goes on and tell how she/he understands the questions and why a certain reply is given. However, it is very difficult to arrange this kind of pre-testing when studying sensitive topics.

Using a questionnaire in the web

Usability, confidentiality and data security are all important factors in the use of the internet-based questionnaires. Usability means that the system has the right properties from the point of view of the user, and that using it is easy, fast and pleasant (ISO-9241-11, 1998). In the case of internet-based questionnaires, usability includes also that the user trusts the system. The respondent's perception of usefulness and ease of use also determine to what extent he or she adopts or rejects the technology in use (Davis 1989). It is crucial that the respondent has the patience to fill up the whole questionnaire. The respondent's feelings about the system can also influence the reliability of the answers given. Accessing the questionnaire and the technical format (i.e. web form) of the questionnaire has to be as standard as possible. From the point of view of data handling web is a very efficient way to gather information. The data is automatically saved and mistakes made in the manual handling of data are avoided (Watson & al. 2001).

Using Internet ensures the young respondents the confidentiality and protection of privacy, which are crucial in studying sensitive issues. The young person can answer in any location where Internet is available.

Children and youngsters differ in how long they need for responding and how quickly they understand the questions. Internet provides a good setting for individual differences. Instead of feeling that the interviewer is waiting impatiently for the answers, the respondents can take their time, and also go back and forth reading

the questions. On the other hand, the questions have to be very clear as there is no possibility for clarification from the interviewer.

When using the net as a tool of gathering research data, special attention has to be paid to data security. In order to ensure the confidentiality of the data, technical data security is important. The information is transferred from the web form to the server through protected connection (Secure Sockets Layer, SSL). This guarantees that outsiders cannot read the information as it is transferred over internet. The security codes for reading the material are given only to the researchers. The final data has no information enabling identification of the respondent.

At the end of the questionnaire form the respondents are given directions for emptying the temporary internet files. This erases the given answers and all tracks that the particular computer has been used to visit the web pages including the questionnaire.

Ethical and legal challenges in studying sensitive issues among the children

According to Pim Cuijpers "there is no solution for the ethical dilemma of the need to involve parents while these parents are at the same time the problem". Cuijpers writes about the prevention programmes for children of problem drinkers, but the same applies to some extent to the data collection among the children.

Research ethics are especially emphasized when groups that can be considered particularly vulnerable (children, handicapped people, ethnic minorities etc.) are studied. The aim is to protect their autonomy and privacy and also to ensure their voluntary partaking in future studies (Nikander & Zechner 2006). As Nikander and Zechner point out, several questions stem from the protective approach. For instance, does one lose the heterogeneity of the group, when one underlines the categorically vulnerable position of the group? At what point does protection turn into paternalism and a form of use of power? Also, emphasizing the vulnerability may underline marginality and diminish the importance of the subjects own activity. The latest studies on childhood have brought forward the equality between adults and children, and the rights of the children are emphasized. According to the ethical symmetry the starting point is not children's specificity, but instead the same principals apply to adults and children.

When studying the children of substance using parents, the parents themselves are the source of the child's worries. It may be problematic to assess when, on which issues and how detail knowledge the parents should be given. According to Malcom Hill (see Nikander & Zehner 2006, 520) the child's age is often a decisive factor when the child's and the parent's desires are in contrast. In the Finnish legislation 12 years-olds and older children have to be heard in social work and in health care in issues affecting their lives. Similar principle could perhaps be extended to the right of taking part in research.

Conclusions

Using web-based interviewing can offer one solution of overcoming the difficulties in asking children about sensitive issues. It is important to test the instrument carefully and to consider various methodological, ethical and technical problems in advance.

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