2nd NEWGOV-CONNEX Training Course

Research Design and Methods

1 – 7 July, 2007
European University Institute, Florence

Programme
Draft as of 23 May 2007

Course Directors
Prof. Tanja A. Börzel, Freie Universität Berlin
Prof. Adrienne Héritier, European University Institute, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, Florence
NEWGOV/CONNEX Training Course 2007
Draft Programme

1 July 2007, Sunday
– 18:00 Arrival of participants
20:00 – 22:00 Dinner at Restaurant

2 July 2007, Monday – “Why bother with research design and methods?”

09:00 – 09:30 Welcome by Prof. Dr. Stefano Bartolini, Director of the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, Florence
Introduction to the Training Course
Prof. Dr. Adrienne Héritier, European University Institute, and Prof. Dr. Tanja Börzel, Freie Universität Berlin

09:30 – 10:00 Presentation of the Training Course Participants

10:00 – 11:45 Research Designs and Methods: Why Bother?
Prof. Dr. Thomas Risse, Freie Universität Berlin

11:45 – 12:15 Coffee Break

12:15 – 13:45 Presentation of 2 research outlines of participants, followed by discussion, 45 min each

13:45 – 15:15 Lunch

15:15 – 17:30 Presentation of 3 research outlines of participants, followed by discussion, 45 min each

17:30 – 18:00 Coffee Break

18:00 – 19:30 Toward the Europeanization of Public Spheres? Theoretical Concepts and Empirical Research
Prof. Dr. Thomas Risse, Freie Universität Berlin

20:00 – Dinner at Restaurant
3 July 2007, Tuesday – “Contextualization: the limits of generalization in the social sciences”

09:00 – 10:45  
*Contextualisation: the limits of generalisation in the social sciences*  
Prof. Dr. *Ellen Immergut*, Humboldt Universität Berlin, Institute of Social Science

10:45 – 11:15  
Coffee Break

11:15 – 13:30  
Presentation of 3 research outlines of participants, followed by discussion, 45 min each

13:30 – 15:00  
Lunch

15:00 – 16:30  
Presentation of 2 research outlines of participants, followed by discussion, 45 min each

16:30 – 17:00  
Coffee Break

17:00 – 18:30  
*Political Institutions: An Anchor for Contextual Research*  
Prof. Dr. *Ellen Immergut*, Humboldt Universität Berlin, Institute of Social Science
4 July 2007, Wednesday – “Causal analysis and quantitative methods”

09:00 – 10:45  
Political Methodology in Macrocomparative Research Designs: Reflections on General Practices
Prof. Dr. Bernhard Kittel, Professor of Social Science Methods, Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg

10:45 – 11:15  
Coffee Break

11:15 – 13:30  
Presentation of 3 research outlines of participants, followed by discussion, 45 min each

13:30 – 15:00  
Lunch

15:00 – 16:30  
Presentation of 2 research outlines of participants, followed by discussion, 45 min each

16:30 – 17:00  
Coffee Break

17:00 – 18:30  
Statistical Narratives and the Properties of Macro-level Variables: Labor Market Institutions and Employment Performance in Macrocomparative Research
Prof. Dr. Bernhard Kittel, Professor of Social Science Methods, Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg

18:30 – 20:00  
Dinner at the Badia

20:00 – 21:30  
Round Table: Who needs methods
- Prof. Dr. Stefano Bartolini, Director of the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, Florence
- Prof. Dr. Fritz Kratochwil, SPS Department, European University Institute
- Prof. Dr. Thomas Risse, Freie Universität Berlin
Co-Chairs: Prof. Dr. Adrienne Héritier, European University Institute, and Prof. Dr. Tanja Börzel, Freie Universität Berlin
5 July 2007, Thursday – “Qualitative Comparative Analysis”

09:00 – 10:45  ‘Qualitative Comparative Analysis’ (QCA) – What It Is and What It Is Not  
Dr. Claudius Wagemann, Istituto italiano di scienze umane (SUM), Florence

10:45 – 11:15  Coffee Break

11:15 – 13:30  Presentation of 3 research outlines of participants, followed by discussion, 45 min each

13:30 – 15:00  Lunch

15:00 – 16:30  Presentation of 2 research outlines of participants, followed by discussion, 45 min each

16:30 – 17:00  Coffee Break

17:00 – 18:30  Applications of QCA – Problems and Results  
Dr. Claudius Wagemann, Istituto italiano di scienze umane (SUM), Florence
6 July 2007, Friday – “(Critical) Discourse Analysis: Theories, Methods and Applications”

09:00 – 10:45 (Critical) Discourse Analysis: Key Concepts and Terms
Dr. Michał Krzyżanowski, Department of Linguistics and English Language, Lancaster University

10:45 – 11:15 Coffee Break

11:15 – 12:45 Presentation of 2 research outlines of participants, followed by discussion, 45 min each

12:45 – 14:15 Lunch

14:15 – 15:45 Presentation of 2 research outlines of participants, followed by discussion, 45 min each

15:45 – 16:15 Coffee Break

16:15 – 17:45 The Inside-Outside Perspective: CDA and the Study of Discourses of/about the European Union
Dr. Michał Krzyżanowski, Department of Linguistics and English Language, Lancaster University

18:00 – 19:00 Concluding Session of the Training Course and De-Briefing
Prof. Dr. Tanja Börzel, Freie Universität Berlin, and Prof. Dr. Adrienne Héritier, European University Institute

20:00 – Dinner at the Badia

7 July 2007, Saturday
Departure of Participants
Lecture Abstracts

I.1 Thomas Risse: Research Designs and Methods: Why Bother?
This lecture deals with some basic issues of research design and methods: What is the whole purpose of inquiry in the social sciences? What can we know, and how do we know a social phenomenon when we see one? The lecture then addresses the distinction between descriptive and causal inference. It concludes with some of the basic problems of qualitative research, such as the small-n problem and criteria for case selection.

I.2 Thomas Risse: Toward the Europeanization of Public Spheres? Theoretical Concepts and Empirical Research
For quite some time, the debate about a European public sphere was largely confined to normative reasoning in absence of empirical data. Today, a veritable research community has formed studying the emergence of a European public sphere from a variety of perspectives. The lecture discusses both various theoretical conceptualizations of a European public sphere and empirical applications.

II.1 Ellen Immergut: Contextualisation: the limits of generalisation in the social sciences
This talk will focus on arguments stressing the importance of context in social science explanation, and on the method of comparative case study analysis.

II.2 Ellen Immergut: Political Institutions: An Anchor for Contextual Research
This talk will illustrate the various strategies for dealing with the problems of contextuality by drawing on my various research projects in the areas of health, pension and constitutional politics.

III.1 Bernhard Kittel: Political Methodology in Macrocomparative Research Designs: Reflections on General Practices
In macrocomparative research, the typical units of analysis are countries. This fact has important implications for the validity, reliability and generalizability of inferences drawn from empirical findings, as well as their ontological and epistemological fundaments. In the lecture, three concerns will be discussed. In the first part, the double question what social macrophenomena are and how these can be conceptualised as well as the methodological implications of these considerations will be discussed. The second part deals with motivations for the typical strategy for case selection, convenience sampling. In the third part, issues of measurement and data quality are addressed. The lecture concludes with some implications for macroquantitative comparative research.

III.2 Bernhard Kittel: Statistical Narratives and the Properties of Macro-level Variables: Labor Market Institutions and Employment Performance in Macrocomparative Research
Pooled time-series cross-section analysis is considered by many as the most up-to-date method for answering macrocomparative research questions. In this lecture, I disagree with this view and argue that the usefulness of this approach depends on the sort of questions asked and the type of data analysed. Using panel data for macrocomparative questions adds the time dimension to cross-sectional data. Whether this extension adds useful information hence depends on the time properties of the variables. Distinguishing between economic, political and institutional concepts, I propose a taxonomy of time properties of variables. The implications of these considerations are exemplified in an analysis of the effect of labour market institutions on employment performance in the low-wage sector.
IV.1 Claudius Wagemann: ‘Qualitative Comparative Analysis’ (QCA) – What It Is and What It Is Not

It seems that the acronym ‘QCA’ has become very fashionable in the last two decades of methodological discussion. QCA refers to ‘Qualitative Comparative Analysis’ and describes a family of methodological techniques, developed by the American social scientist Charles C. Ragin. Briefly stated, QCA helps to analyze systematically the sufficient and necessary (combinations of) conditions for a given outcome. As such, its aim is to take account of the causal complexity which is typical for social science argumentation (equifinality, conjunctural causation, case knowledge, etc.). Although often being praised as a ‘third way’ in methodology, solving typical problems of so-called qualitative and quantitative research, it is not entirely clear to every participant in the discussion what QCA actually is. Therefore, the general knowledge about QCA tends to be vague.

The state-of-the-art lecture will introduce the different variants of QCA and will show their further development since the late 1980s until today. It will, above all, clarify, what QCA is and what it does, but also what it is not and what it does not do.

IV.2 Claudius Wagemann: Applications of QCA – Problems and Results

Scientific publications which are based on the QCA methodology, often suffer from two important deficits: On the one hand, no standards for a ‘good QCA’ exist (whereas they do exist for a ‘good regression analysis’). A reason for this is that the methodological community is very small and that the method is hardly known to editors and reviewers. The first part of the ‘current research’ lecture will show how the QCA community tries to elaborate and diffuse methodological standards.

On the other hand, results from a QCA analysis are very ‘compared’ with results which are achieved with standard statistical techniques. Very often, it is overlooked that the two methodological approaches are based on completely different assumptions. Rather, the different approaches should be combined, paying attention to the different natures. The second part of the lecture will introduce an example for such a ‘triangulation’, taken from the research area on democracy support.

Both parts present ‘work in progress’ and are based on current research projects.

V.1 Michał Krzyżanowski: (Critical) Discourse Analysis: Key Concepts and Terms

The primary aim of the first lecture devoted to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is to highlight its history, main trends, key elements of its theory and methodology as well as its key research areas/foci. The lecture shall start from a general introduction and description of the CDA by pointing to its development, its (inter-/post-) disciplinary ontology as well as to its placement vis-à-vis other fields within humanities and social sciences. Then, the key research traditions of the Critical Discourse Analysis shall be highlighted and their basic foci as well as theoretical and methodological approaches pointed to. A particular attention shall be paid to the most broadly developed and most numerous represented (as well as the most widely-applied) tradition within CDA, i.e. its Discourse-Historical or ‘Viennese’ approach. Then, the lecture shall focus on the central concepts of the Critical Discourse Analysis by explaining in detail such notions as, inter alia: discourse, text, context, intertextuality and interdiscursivity, recontextualisation, etc. In the final part of the lecture, the analytical role and application of those concepts and key premises of the CDA shall be highlighted on the example of research on the right-wing populist discourses.
V.2 Michal Krzyżanowski: The Inside-Outside Perspective: CDA and the Study of Discourses of/about the European Union

The second lecture shall focus on the applications of the CDA’s Discourse-Historical Approach to the study of discourses of/about the European Union. A peculiar inside-outside perspective shall be followed in order to highlight different methods and pathways of analysis of: (a) discursive practices within the EU institutions (i.e. the ‘inside’ perspective), and (b) discourses about the European Union politics in the national media of the EU member-states (i.e. the ‘outside’ perspective). The dual perspective shall help pointing to how the CDA-based approaches may become useful in studying the EU-politics from diverse standpoints. The inside-outside perspective shall also shed light on how the recent academic and extra-academic debates on the EU (e.g. on its ‘Constitutionalisation’, its ‘Democratic Deficit’, or on the need for creating an EU-centred ‘European Public Sphere’) may become informed by the presented, empirically-funded and qualitative approaches. In the first instance (within the ‘inside’ perspective drawing on the example of the 2002-03 European Convention), participants shall be made familiar with an approach which, combining CDA and ethnographic research, shows how diverse discursive practices contribute to the ways in which the European Union ‘works in practice’. On the other hand (i.e. within the ‘outside’ perspective), an EU-external approach is to be highlighted by drawing on the example of the newspaper coverage of the final session of the 2003 Intergovernmental Conference in eight EU member-states. The latter shall be presented to show how a variety of nationally-specific ideas on the supranational process of EU-integration are being discursively constructed, re-contextualised and disseminated by means of the media.