

**InZentIM – Interdisciplinary Center for Integration and Migration Research, Duisburg-Essen, Germany**

**Invite to Workshop: Documentary Method in Migration Research - Focus on interpreting interviews**

**Anja Weiß, University of Duisburg-Essen, Saturday June 15<sup>th</sup> and Monday June 17<sup>th</sup> 2019**

In the German language social sciences some qualitative research methods have evolved over decades that are not well published in the English language (for an overview see the multilingual open access journal [Forum Qualitative Research](#)). The documentary method builds on the sociology of knowledge as proposed by Karl Mannheim and developed into a large methodological school by Ralf Bohnsack. It is geared towards understanding how class specific, generation specific, migration specific, gendered, and other socially structured differences shape the habitual way in which we view the world—often in a manner implicit to our practices and cognitive patterns.

The method is very in-depth in looking not only at the content of what is said, but focusing on how people say and do things. It is efficient as it starts with systematic comparison early in the interpretive process. Results are mostly presented in the form of typologies, but also as case-comparative research.

For example, when researching discrimination, interviewees may say that they never experienced discrimination. When looking at how they talk about finding housing and jobs we may see differences in the strategies they use and the obstacles they see in finding access. With sampling strategies zooming in on these differences, we will be able to connect types of implicit practical orientations to social position, migration, class and gender status. For an elaborate example of this methodology in migration research, see (Nohl et al. 2014; Nohl/ Somel 2015). For English language introductory texts to the methods see the appendix in the aforementioned book and (Bohnsack 2014; Nohl 2010). For a German language introduction see Nohl (2017).

The two-day workshop will first introduce you to the method with a focus on practicing the method yourselves. It will then allow 4 researchers to discuss their material and results in the group. Please plan to spend some time on Sunday either reading other's material and/or prepare your own analysis for discussion on Monday.

Prof. Dr. Anja Weiß has been using and teaching the documentary method for some decades. She is co-author of the Nohl et al. (2014) book on high skilled migration and has authored further publications on transnational research design (Weiß/ Nohl 2012). Her main research interests are in the sociology of high skilled migration, professional knowledge and in theorizing global inequalities.

Bohnsack, R (2014). "Documentary Method." In: Flick, U (ed.). *SAGE Handbook of Analyzing Qualitative Data*. Thousand Oakes, London, New Delhi, pp. 217-233.

Nohl, A-M (2010). "Narrative interview and documentary method." In: Bohnsack, R, et al. (ed.). *Qualitative Research and Documentary Method in Educational Science - Results from Brazilian-German Cooperation*. Opladen, pp. 195-217, [http://www.ssoar.info/ssoar/bitstream/handle/document/31725/ssoar-2010-bohnsack\\_et\\_al-Qualitative\\_analysis\\_and\\_documentary\\_method.pdf?sequence=1](http://www.ssoar.info/ssoar/bitstream/handle/document/31725/ssoar-2010-bohnsack_et_al-Qualitative_analysis_and_documentary_method.pdf?sequence=1).

Nohl, A-M (2017). *Interview und dokumentarische Methode. Anleitungen für die Forschungspraxis*. Wiesbaden.

Nohl, A-M et al. (2014). *Work in Transition. Cultural Capital and Highly Skilled Migrants' Passages into the Labour Market*. Toronto.

Nohl, A-M/ Somel, RN (2015). *Education and social dynamics : a multilevel analysis of curriculum change in Turkey*. New York ; London.

Weiß, A/ Nohl, A-M (2012). "Overcoming methodological nationalism in migration studies. Cases and contexts in multi-level comparisons." In: Amelina, A, et al. (ed.). *Beyond methodological nationalism: research methodologies for cross-border studies*. London, pp. 65-87.

**Preparation:** For those who are new to learning the method, please send anonymized narrative interview material from your research to [anja.weiss@uni-due.de](mailto:anja.weiss@uni-due.de) a week before the workshop so that we can use it in the workshop. Reading some introductory texts will be helpful, too.

### **Workshop Program**

Venue: LE 502

#### Saturday June 15<sup>th</sup>

9:00 am Welcome

9:30 Documentary Method – Introduction to theory and first step of interpretation

11:00 short break

11:15 to 12:15 Formulating interpretation – workshop style with a subgroup of beginners and a subgroup of more advanced practitioners

12:15 to 1:15 pm Lunch

1:15 to 1:45 open questions concerning formulating interpretation

1:45 introduction to reflecting interpretation and comparative analysis

2:30 Coffee break

3:00 reflecting interpretation – workshop style workshop style with a subgroup of beginners and a subgroup of more advanced practitioners

4:00 discussion of interpretations by participants – open questions

5:00 conclusion

Task for participants new to the method: Send an interpretation of a short sequence to [anja.weiss@uni-due.de](mailto:anja.weiss@uni-due.de) until 4 pm on Sunday

#### Monday June 17<sup>th</sup>

10 am Feedback to the interpretations – open questions

11 am Presentation by Ilana Nussbaum of a multi-dimensional typology in migration research

12:30 lunch break

13:30 Inputs on further projects (Study group on cultural capital (Anja), multi-level organizational research (Nicolle) with discussion

15:00 Coffee break

15:30 Transatlantic cooperation in migration research with the documentary method (as well as the option to discuss methodological questions in more depth)

17:00 Conclusion

