

# EERA Summer School 2017 on “Methods and Methodology in Educational Research”

10 – 14 July 2017  
Linz, Austria



## Abstracts

### Monday, July 10th

**Theo Wubbels** (University of Utrecht)

**Keynote: *Interpersonal Relationships in Education – Research Fields and Strategies***

Teacher-student relationships are an important factor in effective learning environments. This presentation will cover some findings of a research program that studied for more than thirty years teacher-student relationship and will situate these results in the broader knowledge base on teacher student relationships. I will summarise the interpersonal perspective on the study of teaching and introduce instruments to measure perceptions of the teacher-student relationship and teacher-student interactions. Then I will we present some results on for example the associations of teacher-student relationships and student outcomes, changes in the teacher-student relationships in time and developments over the teaching career, common teacher problems in the relationships with their classes, building positive and negative teacher-student relationships et cetera. This will result in a list of questions for further study.

### Tuesday, July 11th

**Julia Gerick** (University of Hamburg)

**Keynote: *Digital Media in Teaching and Learning – Research fields and strategies***

Given the transition towards an information or knowledge society, digital media are gaining more and more importance in the area of teaching and learning. The presentation will focus on key questions in the context of teaching and learning with digital media, for example in regard to students ‘digital’ competencies referring to the results of the International Computer and Information Literacy Study (ICILS 2013). Furthermore, typical research strategies analysing such questions will be presented (e.g. self-reporting instruments vs. competence tests). Finally, open questions in this field of research will be outlined, for example in terms of new fields of development like computational thinking.

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**Wednesday, July 12<sup>th</sup> (at BIFIE in Salzburg)**

**Simone Breit, Michael Bruneforth**

***Keynote: Towards competence oriented education and outcome monitoring in Austria***

The presentation introduces the recent reform project to establish education standards in Austrian education. Following a brief introduction into the specifics of the Austrian education systems and recent trends and reforms, the talk discusses how education reformers aimed to reach a consensus on education standards defining key competencies and foster them in primary and secondary education. The talk provides insight in 10 years' experience with the system of monitoring of standards with compulsory external and voluntarily internal assessments with the goal to provide knowledge to each school and most teachers supporting school development. The talk finishes with a discussion of how to balance the attempt to improve accountability with the equally important goal to strengthen trust between stakeholder within school and between schools and administration and public.

**Christian Wiesner, David Kemethofer, Ann Cathrice George, Sophia Angerer**

***Workshop I: Design and findings of recent BIFIE research on educational standards***

As in every country the educational standards in Austria are embedded in a complex multi-level system including diverse actors and elements (e.g. teachers, school leaders, school supervision, teacher training, research, resources, etc.). Taking all these parts into account, we present a framework model for the usage of feedback being generated through an educational standards test. Based on the model we acquire possible effects on the success of such a feedback and develop approaches of research clarifying or supporting the process. Finally we put spotlights on individual facets by presenting actual research on educational standards. The multidisciplinary projects necessitate incorporating different levels (e.g. teachers, school leaders, school supervision, conception of items presented in educational research) and research methods (theoretical, qualitative, quantitative, mixed method). For each design we discuss opportunities and possible limitations.

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**Erich Svecnik** (BIFIE Graz)

**Maria Grillitsch** (BIFIE Graz)

## ***Workshop II: Design and findings of recent BIFIE evaluation projects in education***

This workshop gives a short overview on the theoretical foundations of formative evaluation projects done by the BIFIE and introduces into the methodology used in those projects. In detail, three innovations in the Austrian education system run by the federal ministry of education are currently being evaluated: the reform of primary schools including transition from kindergarten into school, Inclusive Pilot Regions, and SQA – School Quality in General Education. Each of those requires an adapted evaluative approach under consideration of specific aspects inherent in them. Therefore, a multimethod and multiperspective strategy involving quantitative as well as qualitative research methods is appropriate. Each target of evaluation will be outlined shortly and the specific evaluative approach will be discussed as well as key findings will be presented. Furthermore, the areas of tension of formative evaluation between decision makers, scientific community, and pedagogical practice will be addressed as well.

**N.N.**

## ***Workshop III: Summative and formative competence assessment in Austria***

This workshop gives insight into competence assessment in lower secondary school in Austria. The competences in English as a foreign language will be assessed nationwide every five years with a paper-pencil-test in listening, reading and writing at grade 8. Teachers and headmasters get the results in order to stimulate school development. A formative assessment in listening and reading can be used voluntarily by teachers in order to know the students' proficiency. This assessment is computer based and allows conclusions to the needs of individuals and the class. Within the workshop you learn more about the analogy and differences of both instruments.

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## Thursday, July 13th

**Susanne Schwab** (University of Wuppertal & North-West University, South Africa)

### ***Keynote: Including persons with disabilities in research***

The implementation of inclusive education is one of the biggest educational reforms in European countries. As a consequence, research is no longer “about” students with special education needs (SEN), but increasingly “with” students with SEN. The goal of this lecture is to point out specific methodological and ethical issues when doing research with this specific target group. We will illustrate methodological problems (e.g. the relevance of measurement invariance for group comparisons of latent variables) and ethical issues in the relation with participants with SEN. Examples from the field of students’ social participation will be used to show how different research methods (e.g. students’ questionnaires, teacher ratings, sociometric nominations, observations etc.) can lead to different results and also to different conclusions. Ethical issues shall be highlighted with regard to child-centered ethics in the context of research in inclusive education. In many ways, if not most, the implications of ethical issues in inclusive education parallels the ethical quandaries that are encountered across the spectrum of research. This paper seeks to challenge doctoral researchers to think more carefully about the research questions that are asked and how answers are formulated.

**Christoph Helm** (Johannes Kepler University of Linz)

**Stefanie Martin** (Johannes Kepler University of Linz)

### ***Workshop: Introduction to Social Network Analysis***

There is much interest in social interactions in the field of educational research. Learning itself can be explained by social cognitive theories. But also teacher cooperation, school development processes, etc. are fundamentally based on social interactions. We need therefore research methods that allow us to analyse (social-)relational data. Social network analysis (SNA) represents a theoretical and empirical approach to operationalize patterns of relationships in terms of networks and ties among actors. This perspective differs significantly from the ways in which individual or group behaviour is typically conceptualized and modelled in conventional educational research. Standard practice usually ignores relational information. SNA in contrast provides a different approach that is more valid when analysing relational data such as social interactions or social learning.

The Workshop introduces both theoretical and empirical key concepts of Social Network Analysis. R software is used to analyse relational data from recent educational research in Austria in order to answer questions such as: How is cooperative learning assessed using the SNA approach? Does more student cooperation lead to higher cognitive and social competence development? How are friendship cliques and learning groups formed among students? ...

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**Sofia Marques da Silva** (University of Porto)

## **Workshop: Grounded Theory**

Grounded-Theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) has been understood as an approach for empirically based theory, against the ineffectiveness of logical deduction. It was developed to respond to the nonexistence of theories to explain the complexity of certain social life phenomena.

GT has originated discussions and criticism (Burawoy, 1998; Goldkul and Cronholm, 2010), namely in what concerns its inductive processes of data driven theory and its procedures to generate theory from the field. These discussions and controversies came as well from the very own founders, originating two different schools of thought on GT.

Positions differ between those who consider only emergent theories and others that defend that using already established theories might bring richness. Goldkul and Cronholm (2010) propose a balanced option as the best procedure: “There is a potential to compare and contrast the empirical findings and abstractions with other theories” (2010: 188).

A number of questions can be put in place when deciding for GT, which is a systematic and flexible method/framework that enable the emergence of themes and concepts outside the existent literature (Bryant, 2002; Glaser, 2001). Doubts can be related to put aside a priori knowledge. Grounded-theory has proved to be worthy of value when prioritizing phenomena over literature, working on emergent concepts and patterns or studying emergent phenomena without being influenced by established explanations theories.

Discussions about Grounded-theory implicate epistemological considerations, namely about the impact, explanatory strength and purpose (to inform practice) of the generated theory empirically grounded. Priority will be given to discuss with students aspects related to what is involved within a Grounded-theory research, such as: designing an inductive research; conceptualization, voice and validity (Glaser, 1998; 2002); the (im) possibility to transcend time, place and people (Glaser, 2002); using GT with both qualitative and quantitative data (Walsh, 2014); the combination of ethnography with grounded-theory for a discovery purpose (Glaser, 2005; Tavory; Timmermans, 2009).

Bryant, A. (2002). Re-grounding grounded theory. *JITTA: Journal of Information Technology Theory and Application*, 4(1), 25.

Burawoy, M. (1998). ‘The Extended Case Method’, *Sociological Theory* 16(1):, 4–34.

Glaser B. G. (2005). *The grounded theory perspective III: Theoretical coding*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press

Glaser, B. G. (2002). Conceptualization: on theory and theorizing using grounded theory, *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 1(2), 24-38.

Glaser, B. G. (2001). *The grounded theory perspective: Conceptualization contrasted with description*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.

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Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. New York: Aldine.

Goldkul, Goran & Cronholm, Stefan (2010). Adding theoretical grounding to grounded theory: towards multi-grounded theory, *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 9 (2), 187-205.

Tavory, I.; Timmermans, S. (2009) Two cases of ethnography. *Grounded theory and the extended case method*, *Ethnography*, 10 (3), 243-263.

Walsh I. (2014). A strategic path to study IT use through users’ IT culture and IT needs: A mixed-method grounded theory. *Journal of Strategic Information Systems*. 23(2), 146–173

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**Angelika Paseka** (University of Hamburg)

## ***Workshop: Qualitative data analysis: Analysing focus groups***

In this workshop a special form of data collection, focus groups, and a way to analyse such data will be presented.

In a first step a short overview on the options to organise and manage focus groups will be given including the discussion of strengths, limitations and benefits of this method to collect data. In a second step a research project carried out at the University of Hamburg about inquiry-based learning will be presented. The aims of the project will be set in line with the idea to use focus groups to get authentic narratives and discussions at the beginning and at the end of a research course. Reasons for the use of focus groups and the organisational frame will be given. In this project the focus groups were used to find out how the students reflect the research process, experiences and challenges they had to cope with. In a third step the participants get the opportunity to work with transcripts and try an interpretation. It will be demonstrated how two different types of knowledge can be reconstructed: 1) discursive knowledge which refers to the knowledge students can speak about, e.g. their descriptions, argumentations and evaluations; 2) practical knowledge which is embedded in the way the students produce their statements. Gaining access to the tacit dimension of the practical knowledge requires a change in analytical stance from the question of what constitutes social reality to the question of how this reality is produced. The analysis of both types of knowledge allows to reconstruct the learning processes initialized by the research course.

## **Friday, July 14th**

**Barbara Herzog-Punzenberger** (Johannes Kepler University of Linz)

## ***Lecture: Migration and Education – Unexpected and Ignored Developments***

Education and migration have been discussed in different countries in Europe and beyond in very different ways. Even within Europe, the educational pathways of descendants of migrants of the same country of origin have been proven to be very different due to differences in institutional structures and composition. While educational disadvantages of specific groups in specific contexts are of paramount social and political concern and have to be explained in detail, the research coverage can be called unbalanced or even biased. Most of the European research literature concentrates on negative aspects of migration-related phenomena. Some have claimed this is due to the history of the nation-state with its sedentary and monolingual bias while others even see the convergence with the history of the social sciences as a reason.

In this presentation I will discuss the latest data from large-scale assessments and other sources to show that the results of closely examined statistical analyses do not lend themselves to these mono-directional interpretations. Furthermore strategies of analyses that open up room for positive change will be described beginning with a disaggregated, intersectional view targeting societal structures and practices within the field of education. In this way scientific analyses can do justice to the different levels from micro to macro or even nano to supra in one of the most fiercely contested fields.