

IASSIST Quarterly

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Special Issue

“BREMEN WORKSHOP” 2009

Qualitative and Qualitative Longitudinal Resources in Europe

MAPPING THE FIELD AND
EXPLORING STRATEGIES
FOR DEVELOPMENT



SPECIAL ISSUE

14 Papers from
“Bremen Workshop”

ON PAGE 5

Editor Karsten Boye
Rasmussen

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Membership
Information

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IASSIST Quarterly

The **IASSIST Quarterly** represents an international cooperative effort on the part of individuals managing, operating, or using machine-readable data archives, data libraries, and data services. The **QUARTERLY** reports on activities related to the production, acquisition, preservation, processing, distribution, and use of machine-readable data carried out by its members and others in the international social science community. Your contributions and suggestions for topics of interest are welcomed. The views set forth by authors of articles contained in this publication are not necessarily those of **IASSIST**.

Information for Authors

The Quarterly is normally published four times per year. Authors are encouraged to submit papers as word processing files (for further information see: <http://www.iassistdata.org/iq/instructions-authors>). Manuscripts should be sent to Editor: Karsten Boye Rasmussen.: Email: kbr@sam.sdu.dk

The first page should contain the article title, author's name, affiliation, address to which correspondence may be sent, and telephone number. Endnotes and bibliographic citations should be consistent in style, preferably following a standard authority such as the University of Chicago Press Manual of Style or Kate L. Turabian's Manual for Writers. Graphics: Image files should be sent as separate files in TIF format at 300DPI resolution. Announcements of conferences, training sessions, or the like are welcomed and should include a mailing address and a telephone number for the director of the event or for the organization sponsoring the event

Editor

Karsten Boye Rasmussen
Department of Marketing & Management
University of Southern Denmark, SDU
Campusvej 55, DK-5230
Odense M, Denmark
Phone: +45 6550 2115
Email: kbr@sam.sdu.dk

Deputy editor

Walter Piovesan, Simon Fraser University

Website editor

Stuart MacDonald. University of Edinburg

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Editor's notes

Barking up the right tree

Welcome to this very special IASSIST Quarterly issue. We now present volume 34 (3 & 4) of 2010 and volume 35 (1 & 2) of 2011. Normally we have about three papers in a single issue. In this super-mega-special issue we have fourteen papers from the countries: Finland, Ireland, United Kingdom, Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Norway, Slovenia, Belarus, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland and Switzerland. This will be known in IASSIST as the "The book of the Bremen Workshop".

The workshop took place in April 2009 at the University of Bremen. The workshop was hosted by the Archive for Life Course Research at Bremen and funded by the Timescapes Initiative with support from CESSDA. The background and context of the workshop as well as short introductions to the many papers are found in the Editorial Introduction by the guest editors Bren Neale and Libby Bishop. The many papers are the result of the effort of numerous authors that were instrumental in the development and fulfillment of the many outcomes of the workshop. The introduction by the guest editors shows impressive lists of short-term activities, agreed goals, and also strategies for development. There are future initiatives and the future looks bright and interesting.

The focus of the Bremen Workshop is on "qualitative (Q) and qualitative longitudinal (QL) research and resources across Europe". I would have called that a qualitative workshop but you can see from the introduction and the papers that this subject is often referred to as "qualitative and QL data". The "and QL" emphasizes that the longitudinal aspect is the special and important issue. In the beginning of IASSIST data was equivalent to quantitative data. However, digital archives found in the next wave that the qualitative data also with great value were made available for secondary research. The aspect of "longitudinal" further accentuates that value creation.

This is a growing subject area. During the processing one of the authors wanted to update her paper and asked for us to replace the sentence "80 archived qualitative datasets and yearly around 30-40 datasets are ordered for re-use" with "115 archived qualitative datasets and yearly around 50-60 datasets are ordered for re-use". Yes, we do have a somewhat long processing time but this is still a very fast growth rate. I want to thank Libby Bishop for not being annoyed when I persistently reminded her of the IQ special issues. I'm sure the guest editors with similar persistency contacted the authors. It was worth it.

As in Sherlock Holmes we might look for what is not there as when curiosity is raised by the fact that "the dog did not bark". IASSIST has had and continues to have a majority of its membership in North America so it is also remarkable that we here present the initiative on "qualitative (Q) and qualitative longitudinal (QL) research" with a European angle. Hopefully the rest of the world will enjoy these papers and there will probably be more papers both from Europe but also from the others regions covered by the IASSIST members.

Articles for the IQ are always very welcome. They can be papers from IASSIST conferences or other conferences and workshops, from local presentations or papers especially written for the IQ. If you don't have anything to offer right now, then please prepare yourself for the next IASSIST

conference and start planning for participation in a session there. Chairing a conference session with the purpose of aggregating and integrating papers for a special issue IQ is much appreciated as the information in the form of an IQ issue reaches many more people than the session participants and will be readily available on the IASSIST website at <http://www.iassistdata.org>.

Authors are very welcome to take a look at the description for layout and sending papers to the IQ:

<http://iassistdata.org/iq/instructions-authors>

Authors can also contact me via e-mail: kbr@sam.sdu.dk.

Should you be interested in compiling a special issue for the IQ as guest editor (editors) I will also be delighted to hear from you.

Karsten Boye Rasmussen

Editor

August 2011

Qualitative and Qualitative Longitudinal Resources in Europe:

Mapping the Field and Exploring Strategies for Development by Bren Neale and Libby Bishop^{1 2}

**IASSIST
Special
Issue**

INTRODUCTION

In April 2009 the UK Timescapes Initiative, in collaboration with the University of Bremen, organised a residential workshop to explore the nature of qualitative (Q) and qualitative longitudinal (QL) research and resources across Europe. The workshop was hosted by the Archive for Life Course Research (Archiv für Lebenslaufforschung, ALLF) at Bremen and funded by Timescapes with support from CESSDA (The Council of European Social Science Data Archives, Preparatory Phase Project). It was attended by archivists and researchers from 14 countries, including 'transitional' states such as Belarus and Lithuania. The broad aim of the workshop was to map existing infrastructures for qualitative and QL data archiving among the participating countries, including the extent of archiving and the ethos of data sharing and re-use in different national contexts. The group also explored strategies to develop infrastructure and to support qualitative and QL research and resources, including collaborative research across Europe and beyond.

Background and Context

The Bremen workshop can be seen as part of a much broader effort to co-ordinate research resources across Europe. The impetus for the workshop was provided through CESSDA, a distributed research infrastructure that provides access to European research data and supports their use. CESSDA is currently a federation of national data dissemination and support organisations spread

across Europe, with a small, voluntary elected distributed executive. Collectively they serve over 30,000 researchers, provide access to more than 50,000 data collections per year, and facilitate the exchange of data and technologies among data organisations through common authentication and access, cross-European resource discovery, secure data facilities, and the adoption of inter-operable metadata standards. A major upgrade is necessary, however, in order to strengthen and widen the existing research infrastructure and make it more comprehensive, efficient, effective and integrated. This was the key argument for placing CESSDA on the European Strategy Forum for Research Infrastructures' (ESFRI) Roadmap in 2006. Work is now underway to establish and expand an upgraded CESSDA as a legal entity under the European Council Regulation 723/2009 as a European Research

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Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC) (CESSDA 2011).

To date, however, the data available through the CESSDA portal are predominantly quantitative (QN), including official government census data, social surveys, and quantitative longitudinal and cohort studies. While all the current infrastructure initiatives are vital, regardless of data format, there has been little development in building and harmonising infrastructures specifically for qualitative or QL data, and little account taken of the distinctive requirements for archiving and re-using these data. Human data

of the sort embodied in qualitative and QL research are challenging simply because they are endlessly varied, fragmented, complex, dynamic, multilingual, and historically, politically and geographically situated. Preserving and disseminating the products of human culture and society is difficult and expensive, particularly for qualitative data. Even so, new digital resources, including software and e-networks, are influencing the production of human records and how these are understood and communicated.

It was in the context of this shifting European picture that the idea for the Bremen workshop was first conceived. The workshop was framed in terms of identifying existing qualitative and QL resources and exploring ways of building a European network of qualitative and QL researchers and archivists committed to preserving and organising qualitative data resources for sharing and re-use. The endeavour was seen as complementary to the work being undertaken under the first phase of CESSDA. The ESFRI Roadmap (2011) indicates the enormous potential of data—of all kinds—for understanding the profound social, cultural, political and economic life of Europe, including social continuity and change. The Roadmap also reminds us that the first step in developing such infrastructure is networking and co-operation, and it was in this spirit that the Bremen workshop took shape.

The Bremen Workshop

The workshop participants were asked to produce a country report that would set out the nature of existing infrastructure for qualitative and QL archiving, policies and ethos for data sharing, an overview of key resources and collections of qualitative and QL datasets, and priorities for and barriers to future development. The reports were tabled at the workshop and, for the purposes of presentation, were grouped into three broad categories (from most to least developed in terms of infrastructure). One representative from each of the three groups presented a brief overview of developments within the group, pointing out areas of commonality across the countries, and important circumstances and features that distinguished them. The afternoon breakout sessions mixed members from all three groups. They were tightly focused on development planning and structured around these questions:

- What enables and constrains data sharing?
- How effective are existing models for sharing or archiving data?
- What are the pros and cons of having a mixed infrastructure of data archives and collections, centralised and distributed, generic and specialised?
- Is there a case for developing separate infrastructure for qualitative and QL data resources or for merging these resources with existing quantitative and longitudinal resources?
- What are the best ways of getting an archive started and what issues arise in developing and sustaining the resource?
- Would a European wide network for qualitative data archiving be beneficial and if so, how would archivists and researchers prefer to participate?

We present here an overview of developments across the three groups of countries, the insights emerging from our workshop sessions, and some pointers for future developments

Group One – Finland³, Ireland and the UK

This group has established national archives for social science data that include qualitative collections (ESDS Qualidata in the UK funded from 1994, The Irish Qualitative Data Archive (IQDA) from 2008, and the Finnish Social Science Data Archive from 2003). In each case the archives include primarily interview data (with focus groups and other textual sources) and documentation. All three also have, or are planning to add multimedia formats (e.g., sound, images, and moving

images) and analytical files. Although funded as national resources, the three countries are characterised by patterns of decentralisation; in the UK, ESDS Qualidata, for example, is a specialist service of the Economic and Social Data Service, led by the UK Data Archive, and qualitative data is fully integrated into its holdings. The qualitative collection is the most important but not the only hub in a vast network of independent and proliferating collections held by a wide range of organisations that are rarely co-ordinated. This 'mixed' infrastructure with specialist and generic resources existing alongside each other was seen as inevitable; though it may pose co-ordination challenges, there is also potential for innovative collaborations. QL research and resources are well represented across these three countries. In the UK a specialist Timescapes Archive for QL data, funded from 2007 by the Economic and Social Research Council, and developed at the University of Leeds, has been established. It is based on a close integration of QL research, archiving and re-use and is useful as a platform for training in the secondary use of QL data.

At the national level, the three countries in this group have policies promoting data sharing. There was growing awareness of qualitative datasets as important research outputs in their own right, and a growing appreciation, therefore, of the need to produce high quality data outputs for sharing and re-use. Key national funding bodies in these countries all require data management planning and recommend archiving or data sharing as a condition of funding.

Despite these developments, however, support for data sharing in these countries remains uneven; complex issues surrounding data sharing have emerged that need to be taken into account. For example, in Finland there is no established culture of promoting qualitative data re-use and an assumption remains that primary researchers are the only ones to understand and use the data correctly. In the UK such views are much less prevalent and researchers are beginning to explore the potential for combining primary and secondary data analysis in their work and, thereby, increasing the robustness of their evidence base. However, there are ongoing issues around balancing secondary access to data with the need to protect confidentiality and also to allow sufficient time for primary analysis to take place. In contrast to large scale survey and cohort data, qualitative and QL data are not generated solely for secondary use; they are generated, at the outset, by and for primary analysts to address particular research questions. The originating team therefore faces the challenge of balancing the potentially competing tasks of data gathering and analysis with that of preparing data for archiving. For QL research, where projects may run for many years with ongoing waves of data gathering and complex temporal analysis by the originating teams, this may prove a challenging task. The drive to archive in this context may be diminished unless sufficient incentives are provided by funders. Whatever the ethos surrounding qualitative data re-use, these issues have important implications for the timing of archiving and the resources needed by originating teams for data preparation tasks. In the context of qualitative and QL data, then, it is clear that both primary and secondary use need to be accommodated and balanced in the strategic development of research practices and the provision of data infrastructures. Priorities for development identified within this group of countries included technical development of the archives to include multimedia data, and the development of the specialist curation, data discovery and preservation procedures needed for QL data. Despite the advances in these countries a need was identified in each case to build the culture of data sharing and re-use, and to strengthen policies and develop initiatives to support this aim, for example, through funding for secondary analysis of qualitative and QL data. In the UK, one encouraging move has been the Economic and Social Research

Council's announcement of a major strand of funding to support secondary analysis (2011). A need was identified for greater co-ordination of data resources across the mixed infrastructure, so that specialist and distributed collections could more easily be identified, searched and accessed. Finally, funding was relatively fragile and there was a need to secure longer term funding to facilitate this work and make its outputs sustainable.

Group Two – Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Norway and Slovenia

Not surprisingly, this group was highly diverse with some members resembling Group One in many dimensions, but others being more like Group Three. Generally speaking, there is infrastructure in place for quantitative data archiving; all but the Czech Republic have existing National Archives. In most cases, some fledgling effort is underway for these predominantly quantitative-orientated institutions to begin handling QL data. Austria, for example, began archiving qualitative data at WISDOM (Wiener Institut für Sozialwissenschaftliche Dokumentation und Methodik) in 2007 and the Danish Data Archives began handling qualitative data in 2009. The Norwegian Social Science Data Services in Bergen, Norway is planning to incorporate qualitative data and the Social Science Data Archive in Slovenia is in a similar situation. But these national infrastructures capture only a small amount of activity, as there are numerous qualitative and QL resources widely distributed in smaller institutions, departments, and held by individual projects. Many of these are attempting to archive qualitative and QL collections, and some are seeking to form alliances or collaborations with quantitative institutions, where they exist.

As with infrastructure, the situation regarding data sharing is also ambivalent. In terms of actual archive-mediated data sharing, levels of activity are rather low. But there is growing visibility of the issue and other indications of changing attitudes. Formal feasibility studies (for archiving qualitative data) were done in Austria, Denmark and Germany, revealing surprisingly positive attitudes toward both sharing data and using data collected by others. However, hurdles exist in translating these attitudes into more positive actions. Where archives do exist – in Denmark and Austria for example – few datasets have been deposited and the rate of new deposits is low. Major challenges remain in numerous areas: concerns about ethics and confidentiality; researchers' continuing belief in exclusive ownership of data; technological and financial resources constraints; and complex infrastructure models.

Development priorities reflected the national situations, but all pointed to the need for networking with other institutions and countries. Locating stable funding sources was also a high priority, as was engaging in activities to bring about cultural acceptance of data sharing—finding exemplar cases and teaching methods for re-using data, especially to post-graduate students. There are, perhaps, at least some reasons to be optimistic – in Germany, the feasibility study, as well as publications and an annual workshop on secondary analysis, has encouraged more active debate about data archiving and sharing. And the commitment to developing appropriate infrastructure for qualitative and QL data and finding ways to harmonise datasets to facilitate wider re-use was evident across all the workshop participants in this group.

Group Three – Belarus, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland and Switzerland

Members of Group Three reported only minimal infrastructure for curating qualitative or QL data, though there was obvious enthusiasm for developing such infrastructure among a subset of the academic community. Of the five countries in this group, there are only two with national institutions for data archiving, the Lithuanian Humanities

and Social Science Data Archive (LiDA) and the Swiss Foundation for Research in Social Sciences (FORS). Where laws exist (e.g., in Switzerland), these are general ones on archiving and data protection, with no specific provisions for qualitative or QL data.

The culture of sharing is weak to non-existent, at least for qualitative and QL data. In Poland, there is 'no academic tradition' of sharing qualitative data, perhaps partly because of a very strong prevailing positivist tradition in social research, although encouraging new initiatives began in December 2010. In Hungary, there are some existing archives for particular surveys, but data sharing is not common, and the culture of re-using data is not widespread. In the case of Belarus, there is no national infrastructure for archiving. Data that are retained are held by individual organisations. Secondary analysis is rare and occurs only after personal negotiations among primary and secondary researchers. In many cases, research data are not retained at all, even by primary researchers. The recent political climate has, in part, contributed to this situation. In contrast, Lithuania does have some national policies promoting sharing, and in addition to LiDA, there is now access to online research data via Electronic Information for Libraries (eIFL.net), but this focuses more on research outputs and not raw data.

As might be expected within this group, the list of development priorities is long and wide-ranging. Basic work in establishing infrastructures is needed, with the concomitant requirements of appropriate technologies and financial resources. Practical examples of archiving policies and procedures would be highly beneficial, and even with the adaptations required for specific national conditions, could avoid a great deal of work being reinvented. Administrative advice is also needed, for example on the staffing of archives and what levels and specific skills of staff are needed. Specifics include collections strategies (deciding what to archive), and rights management (consent, anonymisation, access controls, IPR, etc.). In one area, however, there was strong unanimity in Group Three, and across all the groups for that matter: the desire and need for stronger international knowledge exchange, joint projects, and resource sharing.

Workshop Outcomes

The Bremen workshop produced an impressive collection of outcomes in three areas: short-term activities, agreed goals and objectives, and a strategic plan for future action. Some aspects of the strategy outlined below have emerged in subsequent communications among the workshop participants.

Short-term activities

The top priority arising from the workshop was to produce this publication, based on revised versions of all the country reports. Additionally we have:

- Set up a network for qualitative and QL archivists across Europe, known as EQUALAN (European Qualitative Archiving Network).
- Created forums for digital communication, including the Bremen workshop webpage <http://www.timescapes.leeds.ac.uk/events-dissemination/past-events-presentations/bremen-workshop/>
- Produced a distribution list for the members of the network in Methodspace, http://www.methodspace.com/group/timescapesqualitativelongitudinalresearch?xg_source=activity.
- Revised a list of international data providers on the ESDS website—this is in progress here: <http://www.esds.ac.uk/qualidata/access/internationaldata.asp>.
- Published a list of all QL collections and resources provided in the country reports—this has been developed through the Timescapes Website (www.timescapes.leeds.ac.uk) and will become available in the resources section of the site in the first half of 2012.

- Investigated specific funding sources, including developing a proposal for infrastructure funding through EU Framework Programme 7, and a proposal for a panel at an international conference in 2012.
- Organised further meetings, including sub group meetings at IASSIST in June 2010 and a further workshop in Brussels (October 2010), with funding from IQDA in Maynooth, Ireland, and Timescapes.
- Agreed to produce case studies from the most developed archives (IQDA, Finland, UK, and Germany)—we are currently seeking funding to publish these reports.

Agreed goals and objectives

There was broad agreement on the overarching goals and objectives of the network, as set out below. Clearly, action in many of these areas is not specific to this network, and it was further recognised that many of these objectives need national or international co-ordinated action. Nonetheless, the group felt it important to articulate explicitly how qualitative and QL archiving should become an integral part of these wider developments. Strategies for pursuing this include the following:

- Active networking, in some cases with better-resourced quantitative partners and institutions.
- Promotion of metadata standards, including specific standards for qualitative and QL data, and encompassing new multi-media formats that characterise these data.
- Development of metrics for re-use and the technological systems to collect data for re-use.
- Lobbying funders for specific policy changes, including mandatory data deposit, funding for preparing datasets for archiving, and according equal merit to secondary analysis projects in funding decisions.
- Changing research output and reward systems to incorporate the production of qualitative and QL datasets. This requires reference and citation credits when using archived data; acknowledgements for data creators as joint authors; assigning Digital Object Identifier (DOI) numbers to archived datasets; and the inclusion of Research as outputs within formal research review procedures (the Research Excellence Framework in the UK and European equivalents).
- Promoting activities to accelerate a cultural shift toward data sharing. This may be achieved through work with professional associations; training and capacity building with postgraduates and early career researchers; and direct engagement with ethical debates over the re-use of data and the balancing of primary and secondary research.

Strategies for Future Development

While all the above goals are vitally important, it was recognised that in most instances, these goals are not specific to qualitative or QL data. As noted above, CESSDA (both in the preparatory phase and in ERIC) is addressing areas of harmonised legal environments, a multiple language thesaurus, secure access to ethically sensitive microdata, and much more. What this makes clear is that EQUALAN is well positioned to define and address issues that are particular to qualitative and QL data.

When devising a strategic plan for archiving qualitative and QL data in Europe, the central question is: in what ways are qualitative and QL data the same, or broadly similar, to quantitative data, and therefore able to be harmonised with existing data infrastructures to enhance comparability and enable different kinds of data to 'speak' to each other? Conversely, in what ways are they distinctive, and thus potentially in need of customised treatment? Answers are emerging from several directions. The Timescapes Initiative has built a specialist QL Archive, and in doing so, is uncovering the special needs of QL data. In this instance, QL data archiving is being integrated within QL research

practice and methodological developments through a stakeholder model of researcher and archivist collaboration. This is not simply a matter of bringing researchers to the archive but taking the archive into the world of research in a way that has had a significant impact on the impetus to archive and to cultures of data sharing and re-use (Neale and Bishop 2011 forthcoming). The experience of the UK Data Archive is also relevant because it was a well-established archive for quantitative data and incorporated ESDS Qualidata into its existing infrastructure, proving that qualitative data can be processed in standardised ways. These experiences, along with related experiences in Ireland, Finland and Germany, point to similar lessons learned. Broadly speaking, qualitative and QL data are distinctive from quantitative data in three areas: metadata requirements, ethical considerations, and cultures of generation and re-use. In terms of the Open Archival Information System (OAIS) model, the intermediate processes of Data Management, Archival Storage, Preservation Planning and Administration are broadly similar regardless of data format. Of course, provision needs to be made for different formats, large video files being one challenge. However, the processes for handling all data are broadly similar. It is in the early and later phases of the data life cycle where qualitative and QL differences matter most. Two of these, metadata and ethics, lie in the Ingest (or pre-Ingest) phase while the culture of re-use falls within the Access phase. By no means are these the only topics that could be chosen, and future strategic planning sessions may lead to a refinement in this list. However, the idea of defining distinctive aspects of QL and qualitative data, and the implications that follow for developing archiving infrastructures that support such data but also allow for harmonising with existing initiatives, seems like a sensible way forward.

The first challenges posed by qualitative and QL data are for adequate metadata collection, in part because of the complex file formats involved. Data need more extensive metadata and contextual material to render them "independently understandable" (a requirement of the OAIS standard) for those re-using the data. Unlike much structured quantitative data with relatively standardised formats, qualitative research data and documentation are highly diverse. It is also generally accepted that qualitative data need extensive contextual information to enable effective resource discovery and re-use. Much of this may fall into familiar metadata categories, but ideally context should also include information about the project background and the social and institutional conditions in the wider environment that might have shaped project design (Bishop 2006; Irwin and Winterton 2011). Ethics is the second area that distinguishes qualitative and QL data from quantitative data. On the one hand, ethical standards for the curation of much qualitative data appear relatively straightforward. Consent for sharing is usually readily obtained and data can be protected through varied forms of anonymisation and controlled access. However, ethical concerns remain a major factor in debates among researchers about the re-use of qualitative data and every participant at Bremen raised some topic related to ethical use of data. Typical issues include: can consent be said to be informed when the topics of research for re-use cannot be known in advance? Are there risks to participants if re-used data may be exploited or participants' views misrepresented? Are researchers exposed to unfair criticism when their work is made visible by archiving or where secondary interpretations contradict or challenge primary interpretations? These factors have the potential to limit the availability of data for archiving in the short term, even where consent has been obtained from research participants. In a QL context, this has implications for the way archivists work with researchers and suggests the need for involvement in the development of a research project from the outset to facilitate ethical archiving (Bishop 2009) and the development of mechanisms to enable researchers to remain engaged in the re-use of data that they

have generated (for a comprehensive review of debates on secondary analysis, see Irwin and Winterton (2011)).

Despite rapid change in recent years, it is still the case that the culture of data re-use is weaker and less widely accepted for qualitative and QL data than it is for quantitative data. This is decidedly the case in the Group Two and Three countries, as the country reports reveal. It also continues to be the case for Finland, Ireland and the UK, although as noted above, the focus of the debate in the UK seems to have shifted recently to the more practical issue of how best to balance the needs of primary and secondary research, particularly in the context of QL data. For data archives, the resource implications are that more effort and resources are needed to promote the re-use of qualitative and QL data. These range from preparation of focused outreach materials to the need for training and support that is customised to distinct audiences. Nevertheless, successful qualitative and QL archiving is most important in this respect, because it plays a decisive 'demonstrator' role in alleviating researchers' concerns and normalising the culture of archiving and re-use.

Future initiatives

The Bremen participants have stayed in regular communication since the workshop, primarily focused on revising articles for this special issue of IASSIST Quarterly. Informal meetings, usually conferences where a sub-group was attending, have taken place to exchange knowledge and explore future funding options. One such meeting was held at IASSIST in June 2010 at Cornell University, where we mapped a strategy for a more formal meeting in Brussels in October. The latter event was co-ordinated by the Irish Qualitative Data Archive and co-funded by the National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis (NIRSA) at NUI Maynooth, Ireland, and by Timescapes. Participants from nine countries were in attendance and efforts focused on developing an application for funding.

The Brussels meeting, and its aftermath, have provided significant progress toward our goals. At this meeting, we formally constituted EQUALAN, our European Qualitative Archiving Network. The remit of the network is to facilitate international data sharing and re-use by developing and implementing strategies for preserving, organizing and harmonizing qualitative and qualitative longitudinal data resources across Europe (EQUALAN 2011). More importantly, the formal constitution of EQUALAN has given visibility to the network with the potential to bid for funding. To date the group has devised work packages for two FP7 funding initiatives for research infrastructures, working with DASISH (Data Service Infrastructure for the Social Sciences and Humanities) and building on collaborations between archivists and social science researchers⁴. The work packages which cover areas such as metadata, ethics, and promoting a culture of re-use, can be tailored to specific funding calls. These are significant developments in a field where qualitative archiving has hitherto commanded little presence.

EQUALAN will use its considerable expertise to work across a range of local initiatives such as those below:

- To develop standards for qualitative and QL metadata: several Bremen participants are members of the DDI Qualitative Data Working Group that is developing a DDI compliant schema for qualitative data.
- The Timescapes Initiative has produced a guide to the ethics of QL data archiving and re-use (Bishop and Neale, Timescapes Methods Guides series www.timescapes.leeds.ac.uk). This needs further input from international sources, and the addition of international case study examples. Additionally, the stakeholder model of archiving QL data, designed to build collaboration between researchers and archivists and encourage deposit of longitudinal

data during the lifetime of a project, could be piloted and evaluated in a broader European context.

- Much technological development is still needed to create the complex access controls required for highly sensitive and confidential data. Fedora software is under development and promises a more robust access system. There is a need to assess existing projects and work out strategies for further development. Such work on access controls needs to remain aligned with ongoing work on similar services (such as the Secure Data Service at the UK Data Archive) that are intended to enable sharing of potentially revealing microdata.
- Capacity building is needed for teaching the next generation of scholars about the benefits of data archiving and substantively grounded methodologies for conducting secondary analyses using qualitative and QL data.

Conclusion

The development of a European wide network of qualitative and QL archives and resources that could fall under the CESSDA umbrella would be a step forward, with shared good practice for practical and technical development of resources (e.g., standards such as OAIS), common protocols for data sharing and kite-marking data, and portals that link qualitative and QL datasets internationally. It would be beneficial to investigate the large range of activities that are already underway in Europe regarding digital repository infrastructure (DRIVER 2010). Strategies for advancing such a network could be developed, again with the support of organisations such as CESSDA and IASSIST. This could involve EU funding for shared activities or low cost alternatives such as web based networking through blogs or discussion lists. Qualitative data is abundant across this mixed infrastructure, and has obvious value and potential as a knowledge base for addressing a range of social questions. Realising this potential will depend on finding the means to more effectively manage and co-ordinate these rich resources of data.

The Bremen and Brussels workshops have been highly fruitful, opening up a new and vital area for research archiving that is currently underdeveloped for the social sciences in Europe. These efforts have highlighted the need to both recognise the unique situation of every archive, and also much shared intent over preservation, data management, and dissemination standards and practices. Extending this to encompass the full range of data across the spectrum of the social sciences, with initiatives to create connections across diverse datasets, would be a significant step forward. The creation of the fledgling EQUALAN, with a broad remit to put qualitative and QL archiving firmly on the map, is the first step towards this long-term goal. FP7 or European Science Foundation funding is a critical next step in securing resources and recognition for qualitative and QL data archiving. Given the complexity and diversity of qualitative and QL data, the mixed and highly distributed infrastructure currently in existence, and the varied cultures of data sharing and re-use operating across the countries of Europe, different models for the growth of qualitative and QL archiving and data sharing are undoubtedly needed. But notwithstanding these challenges, making such data 'count' in the spheres of archiving and secondary analysis will do much to enrich understandings of the social world.

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Notes

1. Bren Neale: The Timescapes Initiative and Archive, b.neale@Leeds.ac.uk
- Libby Bishop: The Timescapes Initiative and Archive, and UK Data Archive, ebishop@essex.ac.uk

2. Acknowledgements:

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3. Because the Finnish Social Science Data Archive website provides much of the information addressed in the country reports, the article from Finland takes a different format. It focuses on challenges to archiving and contributes significant new evidence in the form of research participants' positive views of archiving data.
4. DASISH aims to support social science and humanities infrastructures by providing solutions to common challenges relating to data quality, data archiving, data access and legal and ethical issues. DASISH is funded under FP7 and brings together all five SSH research infrastructure initiatives on ESFRI's Roadmap (CESSDA, ESS, SHARE, CLARIN and DARIAH).

Methodological and Ethical Dilemmas of Archiving Qualitative Data

by Arja Kuula ¹



Abstract

The Finnish Social Science Data archive started archiving qualitative data in 2003. Many researchers found this to be highly problematic. Their main reason for opposing the archiving of qualitative data was research ethics. Researchers who oppose the archiving of qualitative interviews mainly appeal to the confidential nature of the interview situation. This kind of argument against archiving is put under scrutiny in this article. It covers issues such as the presentation of research subjects and the understanding of research relationship. Researchers tend to define the interview relationship as unpredictable and private, and interviewees as helpless participants in need of protection. In contrast, the interviewees themselves define the relationship as an institutional one aiming to foster science.

Keywords: research ethics, qualitative research, data archiving, interviews

Methodological and Ethical Dilemmas of Archiving Qualitative Data

The focus of my article is to study ethical and methodological assumptions related to archiving qualitative data in order to question some researchers' presumptions that archiving infringes on the idea or nature of qualitative research. Before discussing the main topic I will characterize a few differences in research culture between the humanities and the social sciences concerning research data archiving. After that I will describe briefly the actual measures that the Finnish Social Science Data Archive (FSD) has taken in establishing the archiving of social

science qualitative data. The different phases and difficulties FSD has had to go through reflect also the general research culture in the social sciences.

Qualitative data can consist of memoirs, letters, pictures, movies, webpages and audio-visual recordings of different kinds of situations. Due to the identifying nature of images and audio recording, they are probably the most challenging material to archive. I will however, concentrate on interviews. Researchers often define them as difficult type of data to archive for re-use. Those opposing archiving on ethical and methodological grounds perceive a qualitative interview as very intimate, sensitive, un-predictable, emotional and thus infeasible to be archived for re-use by a researcher who has not been in the field doing the interviews. In this article I try to challenge this argument.

In addition to reviewing the literature on this issue, I will examine the results I have obtained when contacting a great number of research participants. Contacting the participants was done in order to ask their permission for archiving data about them which the researcher had promised to keep totally confidential and restricted to his or her use only. According to the views of research participants, the researchers' argument against archiving starts to be revealed as a methodological myth: research participants believe they have control over the interview and they do not interpret qualitative interviews as secret engagements that would hinder the archiving of the data for further use. Instead, they see open access to research data for further uses as self-evident and a way for them to engage in the advancement of science.

Differences between humanities and social sciences

The research culture in Finland has been much more favorable towards qualitative than quantitative research especially since the 1980's. This trend has been more common in Europe compared to Northern America where survey methods retained their place within mainstream

methodology (Alastalo 2008). One reason for setting up the FSD a decade ago was to foster quantitative and comparative research in Finland in a situation where new researchers seemed to have less ability and willingness to use statistical methods than previous generations. FSD has succeeded in its task of fostering quantitative research. At the same time FSD has maintained the idea of fostering the re-use of qualitative data as well. That has not been an easy task. In spite of a wide-ranging collection of Finnish qualitative method books and internationally famous methodologists – such as Pertti Alasuutari or Anssi Peräkylä – we do not have traditions of sharing, reusing or archiving qualitative data in social sciences. The situation is somewhat different in the humanities.

In humanities much research data, like sound records or different kinds of folklore and interview datasets, are archived in small department-based university archives, such as The Archives of the Turku University School of Cultural Research (see Mahlamäki, 2001). In addition to department archives there are larger archives in humanities that have material not only in paper but also an increasing volume of electronic data. For instance, The Folklore Archives – a “Finnish cousin” of the British Mass Observation Archive – and the Research Institute for the Languages of Finland both have a respectable tradition of archiving qualitative research data and strategies in order to follow the developments in the digital era.

Comparing the research culture in humanities with social sciences is illuminating in the context of data archiving. In humanities, research data are considered to be testimonies that ought to be available in case someone wants to check the interpretation and results of a published research. In humanities the research data are also seen as valuable common resources that ought to be preserved if we are to understand and study our culture and history. By contrast, in the social sciences data are seen more often as private property.

The legal aspects of research data are also assessed differently. Social scientists more often emphasize privacy issues, while in the humanities it is more common to stress the significance of research participants’ copyright instead of data protection. Recently the emphasis on privacy and identification as a risk has been challenged in social sciences as well. There is a growing number of examples where research participants have expressed a wish to be referred to by their real names in research publications. This sign of the cultural change in defining the boundaries between privacy and publicity is not peculiar to Finland. The same phenomenon has been reported elsewhere (Grinyer 2002; Wiles et al. 2004; Kobayashi 2001; Kelder 2005).

First steps towards promoting re-use

The Finnish Social Science Data Archive first started to promote the re-use of qualitative data by developing and maintaining a database of available qualitative data without archiving the data itself. It proved to be a difficult task. The data collected in social sciences were mainly in the hands – or at homes, in attics or summer cottages – of the original researchers. It was very difficult to get the basic documentation of datasets and even more difficult to persuade researchers to give information about their data to a public database. Researchers realized it would have meant extra work for them if someone had been interested in their data. Humanities archives proved to be the most cooperative in collecting information about available datasets.

Starting to co-operate with traditional archives in humanities was a reasonable solution. Resources in those archives were very interesting, including large collections of ordinary peoples’ accounts, writings

and memories. The archives were also happy to extract and give basic information about those collections that we identified as potentially valuable to social scientists.

The documentation in traditional archives had been based on data-units – for instance documenting and key-wording each life story of an immigrant instead of documenting the whole collection including the writing instructions that were given to immigrants. The archives saw the extraction of basic information of certain data collections according to the DDI documentation² as an interesting way of promoting the use of their resources to broader audiences. The database consisting of 30 documented collections of traditional archives was for FSD a way to give social scientists a concrete idea of documenting qualitative data and promoting its re-use.

The archiving of qualitative data commenced in FSD in 2003. After that decision the even more demanding work began of trying to get qualitative social science datasets archived. Researchers we contacted were concerned about several issues: the actual usability of their old datasets (either depending on subject matter or IT-problems) and the inadvertent misuse of data or unclear agreements on ownership. The most common reasons were concerning ethics, confidentiality and data protection. Researchers considered those the foremost reasons not to be able to archive their old qualitative datasets. In addition researchers often appealed to a basic premise or philosophy of qualitative research: that data from such research would not be suitable to be archived for use by the broader scientific community.

Since it was difficult to persuade researchers to archive their data, we contacted Finland’s widely distributed daily newspaper’s weekly supplement editor. The weekly supplement NYT had conducted several Internet surveys which included many open-ended questions. The first qualitative data catalogue of archived datasets was made from those surveys. The data catalogue was not very large, 15 datasets, but it included various subjects, such as experiences of domestic violence, alcohol and drug use, sexual identity, living with depression, being a mother for grown-ups etc. Those datasets were our qualitative seed corn with which we were able little by little to show that qualitative data can be re-used since, in fact, they were in demand for methods courses and research purposes.

Another – and still a continuing – problem has been to smooth out the methodological prejudices of researchers doing qualitative research. In order to resolve this, FSD has gained knowledge about data protection and research ethics. By now FSD is considered one of the main information services when it comes to data protection and ethics concerning collecting, processing and re-using data in social sciences. We have extensive web-resources for researchers in Finnish and a few also in English. The most often used are guidelines for informing research participants³ and guidelines for anonymization of data⁴.

The administrative and technical infrastructure for archiving and re-using qualitative data is excellent since in Finland qualitative data archiving was embedded into the systems built for quantitative data archiving in the Finnish Social Science Data Archive. At the moment FSD has 115 archived qualitative datasets and yearly around 50-60 datasets are ordered for re-use. But the culture of archiving and re-using of qualitative research data is still only slowly emerging. Researchers need to be further assured about the advantages of archiving and especially not to over-exaggerate the ethical concerns related to archiving.

The most important opportunities to promote and discuss in depth the ethical and methodological dilemmas related to data archiving have been provided through ethics courses and national seminars targeted at Finnish researchers. During the last few years representatives of FSD have been in many of those events – and we are invited as speakers and lecturers with increasing frequency. A later part of this article will concentrate on methodological and ethical issues that have been most often discussed with researchers in those events. Instead of referring to these informal conversations, I draw upon the published articles from Britain where discussion of the issue has been active since ESDS Qualidata was founded and especially after the Economic and Social Research Council set up its data policy in 1995.

Methodological prejudices towards archiving

Methodological obstacles connected to archiving have been discussed extensively in Britain (Mauthner and Doucet 1998; Mauthner, Parry and Backett-Milburn 1998; Parry and Mauthner 2004; Richardson and Godfrey 2003; Bishop 2005). Such an energetic discussion has not occurred in journals in Finland, but informal discussions with researchers are reminiscent of the debate in Britain.

Researchers seem to be concerned about whether potential re-users of datasets will be able to follow the basic ethical norms which advise researchers not to compromise anonymity, privacy or confidentiality of research participants. This ethical concern is complemented by the assumption that qualitative research – or at least the qualitative interview relationship – is very open, confessional, truth-telling, intimate and sometimes emotional. Thus opponents of archiving cite the power of the method as unpredictably revealing and positions research participants as vulnerable and lacking power or at least lacking competence to control their speech in research situations.

Richardson and Godfrey (2002) assume that the well-being of research participants might be compromised if transcribed interviews are archived. They claim that one ethical risk of archiving is the possibility of identification. The other presupposition is that the integrity of research participants is violated when a researcher they do not know beforehand analyses confidential data.

Another type of risk is raised by Mauthner, Parry and Backett-Milburn (1998) and Parry and Mauthner (2004), who discuss the methodological obstacles to rigorous and truly self-reflective research with archived qualitative data. In both articles, archiving is placed in the realm of positivism and realism. The risk they talk about is the possibility of forcing qualitative data into rational, logical and partial datasets which do not represent the personal, in-depth, messy, haphazard, intuitive and creative real nature of that data (Mauthner et al. 1998; Mauthner and Doucet 1998). The archiving of data may compromise the quality of future interviews since researchers know that the interviews will be subject to scrutiny by other researchers. That may lessen the rapport in interviews, as well (Parry and Mauthner 2004). The risk formulated in these articles is the possibility of revealing researchers' professional performance, with the implication that it will be found wanting.

Although the expressed worry is articulated as a need to protect research participants, it may be that the unspoken real risk researchers attach to archiving is the unforeseen or unpredictable criticism by competitors or malicious researchers. Despite the problems caused by a competitive research culture, transparency of research process is acknowledged as an essential part of science. For example, social scientists researching health care think that public matters, including public documents and professional performance of doctors, should be accessible to debate and scrutiny (Hoeyer et al. 2005). According

to this logic, it is questionable that a researcher doing qualitative interviews acts in his/her own right in a private and individual role while doing publicly funded research.

Mauthner, Parry and Backett-Milburn (1998) claim that qualitative data are not suitable to be archived because using archived data is incompatible with the interpretative and reflexive nature of the research paradigm. Discussions of the difficulties of getting enough context information for re-use support that opinion. Bishop (2006 and 2009) and Moore (2007) have written responsive articles about this subject, but many researchers still think only they themselves are capable of using their data correctly.

It is true that an interviewer can perceive and partly interpret the emotions, expressions and exclamations of the interviewee. Social interaction may contain elements that are difficult to express verbally. However, researchers often employ field or research staff to collect and process the data. At the analysis stage, even those researchers who have personally collected the raw data mainly work with material derived from it. According to the conventions of science, researchers must be able to verbally express and validate all interpretations of data – including those formed in authentic situations – in their research reports. The idea of "pure" or "original" data is simply not feasible. Research data are always a construction, as Bishop (2006) says.

The perception behind the idea that the original researcher is the only one capable of analyzing the data correctly means that the original methodology is the orthodox way to understand research data. What this implies is that the original researcher has an exclusive right to define the characteristics and nature of the empirical world under investigation. That is an odd presupposition for a research paradigm that often accuses quantitative research of naïve realist epistemology. There are few empirical methods in social sciences that can be defined as neutral or unbiased. Even the ethnographic gaze is always partial, not all-embracing.

It is good to keep in mind that re-use of qualitative data is never a replication of qualitative research. Researchers re-using ethnographic field notes and interview transcriptions cannot claim to be doing ethnography him- or herself. Re-use is always partial and most of all, it is usually asks quite different questions from the original research. Even in the case of quantitative data, pure replication of research is very rare. Independent of method or data, researchers may have theoretical or ideological standpoints that affect the analyses process so that it is impossible to replicate the original research.

Most re-use of archived data focuses on different kinds of research questions and methods of analyses than the original research did. For instance, original research may have concentrated on memoirs of women living in the countryside, using long in-depth interviews to study the impact of the environment on the identities of the women. A re-user of that dataset may use parts of the interviews as additional comparative data for a study that collects primary data as well, and focuses on the definitions of mother-daughter relationships. If the dataset is well-transcribed (or preferably with audio- or audiovisual recordings as well) there are many possibilities for analyzing emotions between the researcher and participant, or to carry out interaction analyses (Southall, 2009). According to this view re-using qualitative data is more of a practical issue than an epistemological one. To ensure that data are reusable for further research, there must be sufficient documentation on the context of the research and on how the data were collected (Fielding 2000 and Corti 2006).

Interviewees' perceptions of research interaction

Those opposing archiving on methodological grounds seem to imply that some kind of deception occurs in these methods of reusing data. If research participants talk in an emotionally uncontrolled way, researchers seem to feel the need to protect research participants, and one way to protect them is to prevent the archiving of data. But do research participants lose their ability of control their speech in a research context and will they be hurt by the analysing gaze of a researcher unknown to them?

Very little empirical research has been done on this kind of research experience, but luckily there is one study. It is a British report called "Ethics in Social Research: studying the views of research participants", published by the National Centre for Social Research (Graham, Grewal and Lewis 2007). The study sought to look at research ethics from the perspective of research participants and to identify their ethical requirements. It consisted of 50 in-depth interviews with adults who had recently participated in research. Ten participants in each of five studies were interviewed. They had participated in either qualitative or quantitative studies.

The results showed that the interviewees had ways of withholding information if they so wished even though they had not said explicitly "I do not want to answer or discuss this topic". Participants told how they had given misinformation and how they sometimes had held back or gave an outline of a reply but no details. In addition, they explained how behaving in certain ways, for instance, showing discomfort, affected the interaction and pushed the interviewer to move on so they did not need to reveal personal information concerning the issue at hand (Graham, Grewal and Lewis 2007). These results show that research participants are not vulnerable persons who can be exploited by qualitative interviewing. On the contrary, participants seem to be quite capable of using different strategies to control their privacy.

The report also enquired if people thought that asking upsetting questions could be justified. The general view was that it is justified to ask upsetting questions provided certain conditions are met: the research is important and worthwhile; people know the topics beforehand; interviewers are skilled and alert to how participants might be feeling and able to respond sensitively (Graham, Grewal and Lewis 2007).

The results above remind me of several conversations that I have had with researchers on ethics courses about the problems they have faced in their fieldwork. It seems that researchers tend to think there are ethical problems with their research every time an interview rouses emotions and especially when they themselves are emotionally and feel unable to help participants who have experienced difficulties in their lives. Suffering can sometimes be transmitted, or at the very least make the researcher empathetic and sad. Still, emotions are normal in research interaction in the same way as they are normal in everyday interaction when dealing with different aspects of human life.

Corbin and Morse (2003) have reviewed several research publications which have been based on qualitative interview data of sensitive issues – such as recalling traumatic experiences in life. They found no evidence of interviews having caused long-term harm or that participants required referral for follow up counseling: "In fact, even though participants experienced some degree of emotional distress during and immediately afterward, the anecdotal evidence suggests that interviews are more beneficial than harmful" (Corbin and Morse 2003: 346). Thus the seeing and feeling of emotions does not pose an imminent threat of ethical problems or risks in the research.

Interviewees' perceptions about archiving

Researchers collecting qualitative data often assume that research participants would not accept the idea of archiving. To check this assumption, we in FSD have asked a few researchers to let us re-contact their research participants. The researcher and I wrote a letter together to participants reminding them of the research project and telling them about the possibility that their data would be archived if they consent. In our telephone calls to selected research participants, we have been able to talk about the research, archiving and the terms of the future use of the data.

We have re-contacted participants of four datasets. Three datasets were interview studies and one consisted of university students' written life stories. One interview dataset consisted of discussions of equality and gender issues in working life, another concentrated on environmental conflicts, and the third focused on the life and experiences of women living in the Finnish countryside.

It is almost never possible to locate all research participants after a study has been completed. We were able to find the addresses and re-contact 169 research participants, 165 (98%) agreed to archive their data and only four did not accept the idea of archiving. One can always ask whether these particular datasets were for some reason regarded as non-sensitive by the research participants. However, all the datasets included unique and personal stories, and occasionally sensitive experiences about the issues at hand. The interviews of rural women had taken two to four hours and were very candid. The participants had spoken widely about the joys and miseries of their personal lives. Despite initial concern that consent would not be granted for this dataset, every one of those women agreed to the idea of archiving the interviews for future research purposes.

During my phone conversations with the research participants I learned that for them the main reason to give consent for archiving seems to be a wish to advance science. People had participated in the research because they had thought the subjects of the interviews were worth studying. Giving consent to archiving meant continuing to fulfil this wish. One research participant also said that the original research results did not convince him, and he warmly welcomed re-analysis by different researchers representing different disciplines. In fact, a few were a bit irritated by my contact since they had already made the decision to advance research and did not think that archiving and re-use by other, as yet unknown, researchers would conflict in any way with the original participation decision, no matter that the original researcher had said that she or he would be the only one to use the data.

One person interviewed about gender issues and discrimination in working life, laughingly asked "what kind of a risk or harm could a university researcher possibly pose by studying my ten-year-old words, thoughts and experiences?" The idea that the wellbeing of the participant could be compromised by allowing a third person to study and analyse the interview material was not a consideration. Through this exchange I started to realize how differently researchers and research participants define the research relationship.

It is worthwhile to note that research participants perceive open access to research data for other researchers as self-evident. That kind of perception of research data implies a certain kind of understanding of the relationship between researcher and the interviewees. We can naturally speculate about the extent of the research participant's knowledge of the imaginable risks and harms that archiving may lead to. Another possibility is that they do not regard the interview relationship as

private or secret. For them, the interview relationship is an institutional interaction.

The perception of research interview as institutional interaction supports the idea of participants as conscious subjects, not as ignorant or vulnerable people in need of protection. Corbin and Morse (2003) also point out in their article that research participants are given control over the course of interview and participants know that they are telling their experiences to an audience, even if during the interview there is only an audience of one interviewer.

Towards a reasonable perception of confidentiality

Most qualitative researchers have told their research participants that the people who collect the data will be the only ones using it. One reason for doing so is the presupposition that this way they will get more authentic and candid data. The other reason is the implied nature of qualitative interviews: they are perceived as being sensitive, intimate and thus fully confidential. As the previous results of research participants' attitudes show, the participants can control their communication and they do not perceive the research data as secret and limited to the use of the original researcher.

Defining the research interview as an institutional interaction does not mean that qualitative interviews could not be confidential and include personally sensitive information. Neither does it rule out unpredictable emotional investments by interviewees. It only means that the interaction is predefined as a research encounter whereby a researcher represents the institution of science. The interview is not to be taken as a casual conversation between two or more individuals in a private situation. Unless it is a research design involving deception, both parties define the interaction as belonging to the domain of research. Participants are fully aware that they are talking to a researcher for research purposes.

As Natasha Mauthner and Odette Parry (2004,) say, the joint construction of qualitative data between researcher and respondent has important implications for the ownership and control of research data. Because of that we should also respect the perceptions of research participants. Disrupting peoples' ordinary life by doing a qualitative interview can be tiresome and exhausting, especially if the interview proves to be long and emotionally stressful. After having invested their time and emotions in order to promote scientific research, people rarely appreciate the view that the data can be used for one research project only and at worst, only partially even for that project.

If the views of research participants referred to in this article reflect the attitudes of people participating in research in general, we have to define in a more exact manner what confidentiality actually means. Instead of secrecy, confidentiality should consist of agreements between the researcher and participants on the future use and preservation of the data. Confidentiality would then mean that when data are collected for research purposes the data could be archived and used for further research unless otherwise agreed with research participants. Confidentiality does not mean an all-inclusive secrecy that would hinder the archiving and future research use of interviews. But confidentiality certainly does mean that identifiable personal information gathered during an interview cannot be delivered or presented as such to the media or, for example, or to administrative officials for decisions concerning individual interviewees.

It is usually the researcher who defines what confidentiality means in each case. Researchers who perceive qualitative interviewing as private and secret tell this in the beginning of the research to the interviewees

as well. I recommend that the starting point in defining confidentiality ought to be the archiving of data for broader research use by setting reasonable conditions for the secondary use of data. That would be practical and useful. Respecting the research participants' self-determination in defining the value and usability of data would be ethical as well.

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Notes

1. Arja Kuula has a PhD in Sociology and works as a development manager in the Finnish Social Science Data Archive. She is responsible for the archiving processes of qualitative data and information service on research ethics, privacy protection and copyright issues relating to both quantitative and qualitative data. In 2006, she published a handbook on research ethics and legislation regulating data collection and re-use. She has been a member of the Finnish National Advisory Board on Research Ethics 2/2007-1/2010. arja.kuula@uta.fi
2. The Data Documentation Initiative (DDI) is an effort to create an international standard for describing social science data. Expressed in XML, the DDI metadata specification supports the entire life cycle of social science datasets. Even though it is most suitable for quantitative data, the standard can be used in describing qualitative datasets. (For more information see <http://www.ddialliance.org/>)
3. For further information see, http://www.fsd.uta.fi/english/informing_guidelines/index.html
4. For further information see, <http://www.fsd.uta.fi/english/anonymisation/index.html>

Qualitative Research In Ireland:

Archiving Strategies and Development by Dr. Jane Gray and Dr Aileen O'Carroll¹

Abstract

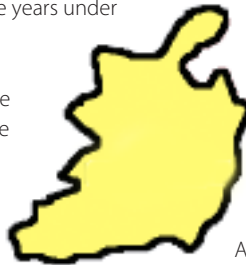
The Irish Qualitative Data Archive (IQDA) was established in 2008 with initial funding for three years under the fourth cycle of the Irish Government's Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTL14). IQDA aims to become the central access point for Irish qualitative social science data, including interviews, pictures and other non-numerical material. We have established protocols to ensure that newly generated qualitative data are documented and stored in ways that facilitate sharing and re-use through online access. Currently we are developing our digital infrastructure, piloting a number of initial collections and building a catalogue of Irish qualitative research. The catalogue has already begun the process of mapping potentially available data, and on the basis of that survey we provide an overview of the kinds of qualitative data that could be archived in Ireland. This paper also reports on: the funding situation for social science research and policies in relation to archiving, IQDA's role in national social science research, our progress to date and the potential obstacles to and benefits of qualitative archiving in Ireland. Information about the archive can be found at www.iqda.ie

Keywords: Qualitative Data, Longitudinal Research, Archiving, Secondary Analysis, Ireland

Introduction

The Irish Qualitative Data Archive was established in 2008, in response to growing concerns that the potential of social science data being gathered by various institutions and agencies was being lost, as much of the data collected did not have a life beyond the specific projects for which it was obtained, thereby limiting potential use and re-use.

Many state agencies are increasingly aware of how the lack of archiving policies is a barrier to knowledge production. In June 2008, the Higher Education Authority (HEA, the statutory body with responsibility for Higher Education in Ireland) introduced a policy on open access to published research. They argued that:



The intellectual effectiveness and progress of the widespread research community may be continually enhanced where the community has access and recourse to as wide a range of shared knowledge and findings as possible. This is particularly the case in the realm of publicly funded research where there is a need to ensure the advancement of scientific research and innovation in the interests of society and the economy, without unnecessary duplication of research effort (Higher Education Authority, 2008).

As a consequence, researchers obtaining part or all HEA funding are required to lodge publications resulting from their results in an open-access repository as soon as possible². The policy further states, "Data in general should as far as is feasible be made openly accessible, in keeping with best practice for reproducibility of scientific results (Ibid)."

However there are barriers to implementing this policy in practice. Forfás is the national policy advisory board for enterprise, trade, science, technology and innovation in the Republic of Ireland. Data archives and repositories were identified as an area needing attention in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences in a report jointly produced by the HEA and Forfás, *Research Infrastructure in Ireland, Building for Tomorrow* (2007). The report argued that, "The absence of data storage and archive facilities and their ability to be updated with fresh datasets is a serious and continuing impediment to high quality social science research in Ireland." (Royal Irish Academy, n.d.a) When the report was published, the only archive for Social Science data was the Irish Social Science Data Archive, based at the University College Dublin, which focused exclusively on medium and large quantitative data sets. As will be seen below, in terms of qualitative data, a number of small data archives existed but these tended to be linked to a particular project rather than oriented towards the creation of a general collection. The sense that inadequate investment in data archives was a weakness in the humanities and social science research (HSS) infrastructure was further emphasised by the Royal Irish Academy in *Advancing Humanities and Social Sciences Research in Ireland* (2007). They argued that "A key resource issue for the HSS is the availability of, and access to, data sets,

including the capacity to generate new data, as well as the importance of ensuring widespread availability of, and access to, previously gathered data." (Royal Irish Academy, 2007: 15-17) In addition to facilitating secondary analysis of existing data archives, they maintained that archives (along with libraries and museums have a key role in "ensuring that Ireland's cultural heritage is recorded and maintained for posterity" (ibid)

It is within this context of this increasing need to build on the wealth of previous research that the Irish Qualitative Data Archive (IQDA) was established in 2008. It forms part of the Irish Social Science Platform (www.issplatform.ie), an organisation which brings together Irish academics from 19 disciplines in 8 institutions in Ireland. The IQDA is initially funded by the Higher Education Authority under the fourth cycle of the Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTL4).

1. Qualitative Research in Ireland

According to Conway (2006), social research in Ireland has drawn predominantly on quantitative methods, with qualitative methods such as ethnography, participant observation and archival research receiving much less attention, though he notes that qualitative studies are evident in some sub-fields such as the Sociology of Religion. In 1988 in a statement on the social sciences arising out of a conference hosted by the Royal Irish Academy, Damian Hannan criticised the weakness of qualitative research in Ireland (Cited in O'Dowd, 1988). Since this time there has been an increasing use of qualitative methods. Most undergraduate and post-graduate social science courses contain both quantitative and qualitative research components and in many universities postgraduate theses are based on qualitative methods. The IQDA is currently mapping the extent of qualitative research in Ireland. We have created an online catalogue of qualitative research. This is an ongoing project but by March 2011 the catalogue contained information on over 480 projects using qualitative research methods.

The constituency using qualitative methods has also expanded beyond social science departments in universities. The IQDA has presented information seminars on archiving to audiences varying from post-graduate social scientists, to nursing students, to oral historians. Many Irish Government research bodies incorporate a qualitative element to their research processes. For example, the Women and Crisis Pregnancy Study, conducted by Mahon et al (1998) and commissioned from the Department of Health and Childcare, was based on in-depth interviews and the Crisis Pregnancy Agency continues to commission mixed methods research. The project 'Growing up in Ireland,' (described in more detail below) also combines quantitative and qualitative methodologies in its research design. In compiling entries to the IQDA catalogue, we found that qualitative research had been produced by various commissioners of research, such as the National Children's Office, the Employment Research Centre in Trinity College, Combat Poverty Agency, the Crisis Pregnancy Agency, Focus Ireland, the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI), The Equality Authority, the National Disability Authority and the Immigrant Council. The methods used include ethnography and community studies and the use of in-depth interviews and focus groups. Recently there has been increasing interest in biographical, life history and oral history approaches and the use of more varied types of research methods such as the use of photographs (Quinlan, 2008) or texts written by young people (O'Connor et al, 2002).

Additionally in recent years, there has been an increase in longitudinal research, including qualitative longitudinal projects, and those using mixed methods. We have identified a number of longitudinal projects (see Appendix 1) with an integral qualitative component based in Ireland (some have been completed, others are on-going).

Major government and EU-funded quantitative longitudinal studies are archived at the Irish Social Science Data Archive. We are in the process of archiving some of the qualitative longitudinal projects mentioned above.

2. Archiving and the Research Culture

All new qualitative social science data generated within the Irish Social Science Platform (www.issplatform.ie) will be deposited electronically and made available online through the IQDA. This represents a major step forward in the development of a culture of data sharing and archiving within the social science research community. The IQDA is engaged in the ongoing development of protocols (see below) that will frame the parameters and standards for archiving qualitative social science data within the Irish research community. However, more work needs to be done in order for data sharing and archiving for re-use to become an integral part of the research culture in Ireland. In particular the cost requirements of preparing data for archiving need to be built in to research funding, and funding agencies need to change their approach away from simply facilitating the production of data towards supporting its use and re-use. Additionally projects based on secondary use of archival data need to be eligible for funding (even where no 'new data' is being produced); this would require a shift in funder priorities in favour of data analysis (with less emphasis being placed on the generation of new data).

3. Current Archiving Strategies

The remit of the IQDA is to archive Irish qualitative data. This remit is interpreted broadly to include

- Research by Irish researchers on Ireland and Irish issues,
- Research on Ireland by visiting researchers,
- Research by Irish and non-Irish researchers on the Irish Diaspora
- Research by Irish researchers living outside of Ireland,
- Research on Northern Ireland (as appropriate, in co-operation with the Northern Ireland Qualitative Archive (NIQA))

The IQDA is committed to archiving new qualitative social science data generated within the Irish Social Science Platform. We will also archive selected 'legacy' research projects. We currently have nine projects either deposited or in various stages of preparation for deposit addressing a range of issues

1. Life histories, 20th century Ireland
2. Integration of new migrants to Ireland
3. Career trajectories of returning Irish migrants
4. Social life in new Irish suburbs
5. Growing Up in Ireland: The National Longitudinal Study on Children
6. Protestants and Irishness in Ireland
7. Irish women's work experiences during the Second World War
8. RACCER: Re-use and Archiving of Complex Community-Based Evaluation Research
9. NIRSA photographic archive of the people and places of Ireland
9. Ned Cassidy photographic archive of the Irish built environment since 1970

A variety of methodologies are represented, including life story interviews, life history calendars, social network schedules, qualitative interviews, observation, shadowing and visual methods, focus group interviews, key-informant interviews, children's essays, drawings and other visual methods (for further information see the appendix).

The IQDA is primarily a digital repository as it lacks the resources to store other types of data. Therefore it accepts interview transcripts, field notes, and other research documentation, audiovisual files and photographs in digital format only. We provide advice on the preferred

formats for archiving and on the technological options available to researchers.

4 Infrastructure for the management and re-use of data

A key goal of the Irish Qualitative Data Archive is to provide a national infrastructure for the management and re-use of qualitative longitudinal data. There are a number of components to this goal. Firstly it involves implementing digital storage solutions that enable depositing of and access to data. This includes the setting of metadata standards to facilitate data retrieval. Secondly protocols that meet the ethical responsibilities of qualitative researchers must be in place. Thirdly, it will be necessary to create networks of researchers around the archive to facilitate and encourage the re-use of the data. These issues will be discussed in the following section.

4.1 Technical database structure

One of the first goals of the IQDA was to design a digital infrastructure that would integrate two previously existing photographic archives with a new catalogue of qualitative research in Ireland as well as a database containing non-visual data. The existing photo archives were housed in two different databases, built specifically for each set of data. Most qualitative archives appear to adopt the approach of building such bespoke solutions. Generally the difficulties in this approach are that such solutions become increasingly difficult to maintain over time and that there is a certain amount of redundancy in effort, as internationally, each archive reinvents its own 'wheel'. IQDA was designed to use Fedora Commons, a general purpose open source digital repository, in preference to building bespoke databases. Fedora Commons has the advantage of being an open source project that is widely used and as such there is a large community of support to draw on if future problems arise. In addition, there is considerable documentation on its use. It is a general purpose solution which allows almost all types of digital objects to be stored; additionally it can preserve relationships with other objects. It is being run on a virtual GNU/Linux server.

The front end of the database is powered by Fez, an open source interface to Fedora. In a piloting phase we tested two other systems: Isadora (a Drupal plug-in; Drupal is an open source content management system) and Elated z but decided that Fez provided the best solution. Fez was initially designed by developers at the University of Queensland, and has since been transferred to the Sourceforge (a web-based source code repository) so that it now is developed by a number of different organisations. One note of caution must be observed however: Fez is designed with library projects in mind and as such the default is often to openness and accessibility – something that is not necessarily always desired with more sensitive qualitative social science material. Therefore it was necessary to modify the Fez operation such that it defaulted to the highest levels of security (see below). Indeed one factor in the decision to implement Fez was its ability to allow us to set access controls over each individual piece of data.

Finally we use Drupal as the content management system which powers the IQDA web presence. This was chosen because, again, it is an open source software, supported by a community of users, with many tutorials on its use available online. Additionally its modular system allows the site to be upgraded with little difficulty and the capability of the site to be expanded over time (for example, we have added a modification which allows us to display selected photographs from our archive online). It is hoped that Drupal's powerful capabilities will enable us to expand the site such that it can facilitate the development of networks of Irish researchers.

A goal of the archive is to become a central access point for information about other archives in Ireland (such as the migrant lives and women's oral history projects described above) and elsewhere. The Drupal end of the site collates information about these archives, as

well as information on preparing data for archiving, upcoming events and issues of note to qualitative researchers. In the future we plan to develop a component on using qualitative data in teaching.

4.2 Metadata

Metadata, often described as 'data about data', is vital for enabling data retrieval (either through browsing or searching collections). Metadata standards can facilitate robust data management and assist in the uploading of data. Further, shared metadata standards allow co-ordination with other data sets and harvesting of the data (to ensure, for example, that search engines like Google are able to identify and return searches appropriate to the archive). A key challenge of the IQDA was to introduce shared standards across the pre-existing databases that we inherited and the newly created ones. Dublin Core is an international standard for metadata, designing the minimum numbers of elements necessary to allow objects in a networked environment to be discovered. It is a very minimal standard. The IQDA added to this standard, drawing on the metadata applied in other national qualitative archives (particularly ESDS Qualidata – a specialist service of the ESDS led by the UK Data Archive, and the Henry Murray Archive based at Harvard University, Boston in the U.S.). Metadata relating to the content of the material archived is in the first instance added by the researcher depositing the data. They are encouraged to use Hasset (Humanities and Social Science Electronic) Thesaurus when specifying key words. The Data Documentation Initiative (DDI) is a "metadata specification, an emerging international standard for the content, presentation, transport, and preservation of documentation about datasets in the social and behavioural sciences" (www.cessda.org). It is our intention to provide contextual documentation that is "marked up" according to the Data Documentation Initiative (DDI) and we are tracking developments in the generation of qualitative DDI standards. In addition to being searchable by key word, we are currently drawing on expertise available to us within the National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis to develop a map based interface which will encourage search by geographical place. For confidentiality reasons, most interview data will be searchable only by broad geographical area (see below), however for photographs it will be at the level of the townland or village.

4.3 Access and Confidentiality

A key concern of the IQDA is to meet the ethical commitments that researchers make with those who participate in their research. As with quantitative data there is always some degree of risk that confidentiality could be breached, and so archives have an obligation to ensure that interviewees are protected through anonymisation, withdrawal of sensitive data etc. The remit of the Irish Qualitative Data Archive includes the establishment of procedures and protocols, in line with international best practice appropriate to qualitative data. To that end we have developed an Ethical Use Framework drawing on best practice developed at ESDS Qualidata, Timescapes, a multidisciplinary longitudinal qualitative project based at the University of Leeds and the Henry Murray Archive in the US. Our best practice handbook is now available (http://www.iqda.ie/sites/default/files/IQDA_Best_Practice_Handbook.pdf)

There are **four** interconnecting components to this framework. The first is informed consent to archive data obtained at the time of the fieldwork. The IQDA has prepared pro-forma letters and forms that have been used in previous Irish and UK studies. The second is the use of a rigorous anonymisation protocol. Such a protocol has been developed by the IQDA based on the experience of Irish and UK research projects. As Opatiz and Witzel (2005) outline, it is difficult to develop a general solution to the problem of anonymisation because such data

are extremely heterogeneous in terms of the themes and areas of life covered. The protocols that we have developed alert researchers to issues they need to be concerned with and suggest possible solutions. The third component is a Rights Management Framework which includes depositor and end-user licenses and legal agreements, in which the user undertakes not to breach confidentiality by using identifiable information in published work or to try to contact research subjects and agrees to ethical use and re-use of the data. The third and final component is a system of options for access and user restrictions; for example, access to very sensitive data may be closed for a period of time.

In addition, along with all social science researchers in Ireland, we subscribe to the ethical standards imposed by professional organizations such as the Sociological Association of Ireland (www.ucd.ie/sai). Part of our role involves alerting researchers to these standards, thus promoting high quality research procedures. Our work here is also informed by the RESPECT project (www.respectproject.org), which was funded by the European Commission's Information Society Technologies (IST) Programme, to draw up professional and ethical guidelines for the conduct of socio-economic research.

5. Challenges for the Future

In order to fulfil its mandate to become the central access point for all qualitative social science data generated within the Irish research community, the IQDA will require additional and sustainable funding and must face a number of key challenges in the future. Key to the success of the archive will be to encourage use and re-use of data through a process of training, publicity and the development of networks of researchers. In addition continued liaison with the social science research community and other stakeholders will ensure that the archive will develop in a way that matches the needs of researchers. We especially aim to work with post-graduate students, to foster a culture of data archiving and re-use, and ensure that archiving is built in at an early stage of future projects. This work must be matched by liaison with agencies responsible for the development and implementation of social science policy, in order to promote the use of qualitative social science research findings and funding for the processes of preparing data for archiving, which will ensure long term value for money in state funded projects.

In addition there is a considerable volume of legacy research in Ireland, currently sitting in offices and under desks. We have been contacted by researchers asking about the possibility of adding these to the archive. One challenge will be to address problems such as the absence of informed consent and outdated digital formats when archiving of such legacy data.

We will continue work with other digital archiving projects in Ireland, and with the recently announced National Audiovisual Repository (NAVR), a multi-institutional project funded under PRTL15, in which IQDA is a funded partner (<http://www.ria.ie/research/navr.aspx>) to develop and implement a common set of methods, policies and standards and continue ongoing development of policies and guidelines that comply with national and international law. We aim to broaden the development of our IT infrastructure and data management tools especially to facilitate deposit, search and retrieval of data. Currently we are developing sample 'soundscapes' drawn from data within the archive in order to raise the profile of the resource.

We are additionally part of EQUALAN, the newly formed European network of qualitative researchers and archivists. EQUALAN is committed to promoting and implementing a strategy for preserving and

organising qualitative and qualitative longitudinal data resources, and we intend to work within this network to develop shared approaches to archiving and to promoting re-use of our data.

We will continue to promote best standards and to educate the research and higher education community about the desirability of qualitative social science data archiving. As we have shown above there is an emerging interest in qualitative longitudinal research. Archiving such research requires intense, ongoing management and interaction with researchers, but potential rewards are high. However, the principal barrier anticipated is the securing of sustainable funding into the future. Lack of such security hinders long term management and planning.

Appendix 1: Longitudinal projects with Qualitative Dimensions

1. Life Histories and Social Change in 20th Century Ireland

In this project qualitative interviews, live history calendars and retrospective social network schedules were collected from a large sample of Irish people from three key birth cohorts: 1929-1934; 1949-1954 and 1969-1974. The research design links retrospective qualitative longitudinal data is linked to a panel study. The interviewees were selected from the nationally representative sample of people interviewed from 1994-2001 for the Irish part of the European Community Household Panel. The data will be archived in the Irish Qualitative Data Archive.

<http://sociology.nuim.ie/lifehistory.shtml>

2. Growing Up in Ireland – Qualitative Module of the National Longitudinal Study on Children

In this government funded study prospective qualitative data is linked to a panel study. The study follows two cohorts of children, aged nine months and nine years. The study was officially launched in 2007 and will be completed in 2013. There is an embedded qualitative module, the data from which will be archived in the Irish Qualitative Data Archive. Data from the first wave are now available.

<http://www.growingup.ie/>

3. Towards a Dynamic Approach to Research on Migration and Integration

This is a prospective longitudinal qualitative study of migrants to Ireland will track sixty migrants from two migrant cohorts over a two year period through interviews, observation, shadowing and visual methods. The project will run until December 2010. The data will be archived in the Irish Qualitative Data Archive.

<http://geography.nuim.ie/staff/gilmartinmary>

4. The Process of Youth Homelessness: A Qualitative Longitudinal Cohort Study

This prospective QLL study uses a life history method to investigate the experience of youth homelessness based on young people's accounts of becoming and being homeless. Criteria for inclusion include: a) being between 12-22 years and; b) being homeless or in insecure accommodation. Forty young people were recruited with the co-operation of statutory and voluntary agencies with responsibility for providing services and interventions to young people who are without a home. The recruitment strategy aimed to include relevant

diversity across key variables including age, gender and geographical location. Phase I: Baseline interviews were conducted with 40 homeless young people, based on the life history model, which prioritises young people's accounts and experiences, both past and present. Phase II: Follow-up life history interviews are ongoing at present. <http://www.tcd.ie/childrensresearchcentre/index.php?id=121&pid=16>

5. Migrant Careers and Aspirations

This is a prospective qualitative longitude panel study of Polish migrants to Ireland. Their sample included 22 men and women aged between 22 and 38 years who almost all arrived in Ireland post 2004, following enlargement of the European Union. Interviews were conducted every four months over a period of two years, including interviews with migrants who have returned to Poland.

6. Irish Centre for Migration Studies Life Narratives Collection

This is a retrospective qualitative longitudinal study, data from which has been collated in an online digital archive. This archive contains four collections of life narratives centring on different aspects of migration in the Irish experience. <http://migration.ucc.ie/oralarchive/testing/index.html>

7. Women's Oral History Project

This retrospective qualitative longitudinal study documents the working lives of Munster women during the period 1936-1960, through the collection of oral histories. The project is a study of the stories of women who engaged in paid work in the period 1936-1960. <http://www.ucc.ie/wisp/ohp/index.html>

8. Leaving School in Ireland

This prospective longitudinal study tracks the school and post-school experiences of a cohort of young people who took part in the Post-Primary Longitudinal Study (PPLS) in 2002. In 2010 in-depth interviews will detail the influences on young people's post-school choices and pathways. http://www.esri.ie/research/research_areas/education/leaving_school_ireland/

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Notes

1. Contact details:

Dr. Jane Gray, Department of Sociology and National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis (NIRSA), NUI Maynooth, County Kildare, Ireland.
jane.gray@nuim.ie
<http://sociology.nuim.ie/JanepersonalPage.shtml>
<http://nuim.academia.edu/JaneGray>

Dr. Aileen O'Carroll, National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis, NUI Maynooth, County Kildare, Ireland
aileen.ocarroll@nuim.ie

2. All researchers must lodge their publications resulting in whole or in part from HEA-funded research in an open access repository as soon as is practical after publication, and to be made openly accessible within 6 calendar months at the latest, subject to copyright agreement. http://www.heai.ie/files/files/file/Open%20Access%20pdf_.pdf page 2

3. For further information see, <http://www.ucd.ie/issda/>

4. For further information see, <http://www.esds.ac.uk/qualidata/about/introduction.asp>

5. For further information see, <http://www.murray.harvard.edu/>

6. For more information see, <http://www.data>

Sharing Qualitative and Qualitative Longitudinal Data in the UK:

Archiving Strategies and Development by Libby Bishop and Bren Neale¹



Abstract

Over the past two decades significant developments have occurred in the archiving of qualitative data in the UK. The first national archive for qualitative resources, Qualidata, was established in 1994. Since that time further scientific reviews have supported the expansion of data resources for qualitative and qualitative longitudinal (QL) research in the UK and fuelled the development of a new ethos of data sharing and re-use among qualitative researchers. These have included the Timescapes Study and Archive, an initiative funded from 2007 to scale up QL research and create a specialist resource of QL data for sharing and re-use. These trends are part of a wider movement to

Keywords: Qualitative Data, Qualitative Longitudinal Data, Data Archive, Data Policy, Secondary Analysis, Re-use, UK

1 Introduction

Over the past two decades significant developments have occurred in the archiving of qualitative and qualitative longitudinal (QL) data in the UK, supported by two major funders of social science research and of data archiving: the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC). The first national archive for qualitative resources, Qualidata, was established in 1994. This followed feasibility studies that set out the case for gathering such resources together for preservation and encouraging data sharing and secondary use by enabling access to publically funded research data. Since that time further scientific reviews have supported the expansion of data resources for qualitative research

enhance the status of research data in all their diverse forms, inculcate an ethos of

data sharing, and develop infrastructure to facilitate data discovery and re-use. In this paper we trace the history of these developments and provide an overview of data policy initiatives that have set out to advance data sharing in the UK. The paper reveals a mixed infrastructure for qualitative and QL data resources in the UK, and explores the value of this, along with the implications for managing and co-ordinating resources across a complex network. The paper concludes with some suggestions for developing this mixed infrastructure to further support data sharing and re-use in the UK and beyond

These trends in qualitative research are part of a wider movement to enhance the potential of research data

in the UK and fuelled the development of a new ethos of data sharing and re-use among qualitative researchers. As part of these developments, in 2007 a qualitative longitudinal research initiative, the Timescapes Study and Archive (Timescapes 2010b), was funded by the ESRC to scale up QL enquiry and create a specialist resource of QL data for secondary use. These trends in qualitative research are part of a wider movement to enhance the potential of research data of all kinds to support robust research, to inculcate an ethos of data sharing, and to provide both generic and specialist infrastructure to facilitate their use. In this paper we trace the history of these developments and provide

an overview of the main data policy initiatives and recommendations that have set out to advance qualitative data sharing across the social sciences. We provide an overview of the mixed infrastructure in place for qualitative and QL resources, focusing in particular on Qualidata as a key generic resource and Timescapes as a specialist distributed resource. The paper concludes with some suggestions for developing this mixed infrastructure to further support data sharing and re-use in the UK and beyond.

2 The Development of Qualitative Archiving in the UK

Qualitative datasets are rich and varied in nature, based on in-depth interviews and a range of ethnographic methods (including participant observation and the generation of fieldnotes, case studies and aural and visual data) to capture the contexts and complexities of real life experiences (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995; Mason 2002). The establishment of Qualidata in 1994 as the national archive for the curation of such data was a major landmark in the UK. Much of the recent history of developments in qualitative archiving in the UK equate with the history of this initiative. At its inception, Qualidata was not a place of deposit itself, but acted as a clearing house by locating existing data collections and arranging for their deposit in suitable institutions such as archives, libraries, museums and other repositories. In 1997, the major funder of qualitative social science research in the UK, the ESRC, made it a condition of funding that researchers should deposit their datasets with Qualidata. This policy change was a critical factor in enabling Qualidata to accelerate the acquisition of its own holdings of qualitative data. In 2000, Qualidata was incorporated into the UK Data Archive, itself established in 1967 and curator of the largest collection of digital data in the social sciences and humanities in the UK. In 2003, the national infrastructure was further bolstered through the establishment of the Economic and Social Data Service (ESDS), a national data service of the UK Data Archive, which provides access to and support for an extensive range of key economic and social data, both quantitative and qualitative. ESDS Qualidata became one of the core components of the new service. The Qualidata Quinquennial Report 1994-1999 (Corti and Thompson 1999) provides a comprehensive summary of the early years of Qualidata and addresses existing archives, cataloguing procedures, dissemination, re-use, management and funding. More recent developments are documented in subsequent reports for the UK Data Archive and ESDS (ESDS 2009)².

3 The Development of Qualitative Longitudinal (QL) Research and Archiving

In the UK and elsewhere QL research is well established. Qualitative researchers have a long history of engaging with time, through a wide range of methods and from different disciplinary perspectives, most notably, anthropology and oral history (Elder 1981). Time is built into these studies in a complex variety of ways. Retrospective studies capture change through biographical, historical or inter-generational accounts. Recently there has been growth in the number of projects that re-visit classic studies of communities, institutions or groups to understand changes and continuities and to re-interpret past findings. Prospective studies, on the other hand, track individuals or groups over time in order to capture changes in the making and to revisit changing perceptions of the past and future. Individuals may be tracked intensively through particular transitions, or extensively across different periods of their lives. Prospective tracking is valued because it captures the immediacy and complexity of real lives as they unfold (Neale and Flowerdew 2003; Saldana 2002; Thomson and Holland 2003). Over the past decade QL methods have begun to gain legitimacy as an integral part of the methodological canon. Researchers are increasingly seeking to incorporate QL methods into their research design and a range of studies are now being funded by government, the ESRC and the main

UK charities (the Nuffield and Joseph Rowntree Foundations); e.g., on lone parenthood, families after divorce, the life trajectories of offenders and probationers, passages through primary school or the benefits system, and the life histories of migrants or people living in poverty). Until recently QL datasets tended to remain the preserve of the originating researchers. Archival collections that bring such data sets together to facilitate re-use remain scarce. Notable exceptions are the Oral History archives at the British Library and the Mass Observation Archive at the University of Sussex. Mass Observation is a key historical resource, a paper archive accessible in person or through an online catalogue, of popular accounts of every day life in the UK, produced by a panel of recorders who respond to thematic directives (e.g., rationing, family food, life during the war, birthdays). The archive is seeking funding to digitise parts of its considerable collection that date back to the 1930s, and a range of secondary analysis projects have been funded to use materials from the resource.

Recent developments have placed QL archiving more centrally on the map. This began in 2006 when ESRC funded the archiving of case studies from the Inventing Adulthoods Study, a nine year study tracking a sample of young people from different regions of the UK (Inventing Adulthoods 2010). The archiving of the case studies has continued with further funding under the Timescapes initiative (described below) and the data are held at both ESDS Qualidata and the Timescapes Archive. A feasibility study into the development and scaling up of QL research and resources (Holland, et al. 2005) led to funding for Timescapes under the ESRC Qualitative Longitudinal Initiative 2007-12. The Timescapes study is resource-led as well as having a strong substantive and conceptual focus. The Archive, which was launched in October 2009, is being developed as a resource of QL data, with the current collection focused primarily—although not exclusively—on studies of personal lives and relationships across the life course. As well as data from the Inventing Adulthoods Study, the archive is collating data from seven core projects that span the life course and from a growing number of separately funded QL projects that are affiliated to the Initiative. In this way, Timescapes aims to build up a range of QL data collections on life course themes across diverse substantive fields in the social sciences, as well as encouraging re-use through secondary analysis initiatives. Its holdings are primarily digital and are multi-media, including audio and written data, as well as still and moving images. Currently the archive is supported by an institutional repository (LUDOS: Leeds University Data Objects Store) which uses DigiTool proprietary software. Documentation about the technical and procedural development of the Timescapes resource is available on the website (Timescapes 2010a). These include consent forms, guidelines for interview transcription and anonymisation, user registration documents, a depositor licence and the multi-media metadata schema. Further documentation will be added as it becomes available. Priorities for the near future are to further develop the Timescapes resource as a working archive across a broader range of projects, and to encourage and assist secondary use of the data.

Timescapes is innovative in encouraging archiving as an integral part of the research process rather than an administrative task relegated to the closing phase of a project. This feature is important because of several characteristics of QL research. Firstly, since qualitative researchers usually generate their own data and, in the process, build up relationships with their participants, they have a uniquely personal affinity with and 'feel' for the data and the context within which it was generated. Secondly, QL research often involves the generation of highly sensitive data that is contextually rich, difficult to anonymise, and therefore runs higher risk of disclosing identities. Particular care is therefore needed to preserve confidentiality. Thirdly, QL projects are often the product

of individual or small team scholarship that can last over many decades. The originating teams control and have exclusive access to the population samples which make up a study, and determine how and when they are followed up over time. Such projects may have a continuously provisional feel; they are never quite finished, either in terms of the potential for further data generation or the endless possibilities for complex analysis and 'reworking' data to produce new insights and interpretations. Finally, unlike quantitative longitudinal data, which is gathered solely for secondary use, QL data is generated, at least initially, by and for primary researchers to enable them to address particular research questions. Archiving for secondary use in this context must therefore run alongside the tasks of ongoing data gathering and analysis by the originating team. This has implications both for the resources needed to attend to these tasks and for the timing of archiving within the project life cycle.

Given these characteristics, QL data needs specialist curation to encourage deposit and sharing while a prospective study is ongoing. Timescapes has developed an innovative stakeholder model of data sharing that enables archiving to be seen as an integral part of the research process. Researchers who deposit their data with Timescapes are stakeholders in the resource and are encouraged to re-use data as well as depositing, thereby combining primary and secondary analysis to raise new questions and produce new insights. Researchers can thereby continue to use their data and link it to other related data as their research progresses. The commitment to good data management planning at the research design phase enables data to be generated and organised for archival as well as primary use and prepared according to international archiving standards along with appropriate documentation or metadata (i.e., data about data that provides important context for the resource). Depositors are in the best position to provide rich and descriptive metadata that is aligned with the requirements of temporal analysis. As users of the dataset, depositors have a vested interest in ensuring that the resource is fit for purpose, with accurate metadata and refined thematic search and retrieval functions (e.g., through assigning key words to interview transcripts). Crucially, the Timescapes Archive enables finely granulated controls on the re-use of data by building in different levels of access: public, registered, case-by-case approval, and embargo. For example, permission to use highly sensitive or un-anonymised data can only be given by the originating researchers, and the proposed use needs to be specified in consultation with the originating team. In this way, the archive opens up the potential for the sharing of data that might otherwise remain unarchived (Bishop 2009a). In essence the archive builds the necessary infrastructure to enable a more personalised mode of data sharing, which (as will be shown below) has been the primary way in which researchers have chosen to share their data in practice.

Timescapes is not a stand-alone archive; it is a distributed satellite of the UK Data Archive which also holds the data for long-term preservation purposes. It is simultaneously a part of the canon of longitudinal resources in the UK, and of qualitative resources, and needs to develop in both directions. Part of the remit is to encourage the linking of Timescapes data with data from other longitudinal resources, both qualitative and quantitative. These have included, for example, Understanding Society (the UK Household Longitudinal study), the National Child Development Study, Mass Observation and the Oral History collections at the British Library. There is also evident scope for comparative research and secondary use projects with international collaborators. These are beginning to emerge through EQUALAN (see introduction to this issue). Distributed archives such as Timescapes can play a crucial role as brokers between specialist research communities (whether defined in terms of data genre, methodology or thematic

content), and generic data centres with broader remits, such as the UK Data Archive (Bishop 2009b). The specialist infrastructure being developed in Timescapes has the potential to form a valuable bridge between the research and archiving fields, and between primary and secondary research, that would enable these to be seen as iterative and reciprocal processes.

4 Data Sharing: UK Policies, Practice and Ethos

The development of infrastructure to support the re-use of qualitative data goes hand in hand with the development of an ethos of data sharing; both are necessary if data are to be made available for sharing and valued as a resource for re-use. The process of enabling data sharing is developing in a wide variety of ways when viewed comparatively across Europe. This is shown clearly by Ruusalepp (2008) who comprehensively reviews developments across the 30 countries of the OECD. He shows that organisations such as the OECD, UNESCO, ESFRI (European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures) and CODATA (The Committee on Data for Science and Technology) have policies that promote or recommend data sharing, and that these policies have influenced the policies of numerous UK organisations (e.g. Office of Science and Innovation (e-Infrastructure), JISC Strategy 2007-2009, and the Research Information Network's Strategic Plan). These policies stop short of recommending mandatory data sharing. To date there are no national policies across the countries of the OECD that mandate data sharing in this way, although there is an increase in recommendations for "data management plans" which ask researchers to take into account data sharing and curation, most notably in 2011 by the Research Councils UK. Even so, the ethos of data sharing is strongly endorsed within these policies and is beginning to have a discernable impact at the organisational level. Since 2000, The ESRC Data Policy, for example, has required all award holders to offer for archiving and sharing copies of both digital and non-digital data, and similar obligations continue in the 2010 Policy (ESRC 2000; ESRC 2010b). The recently revised ESRC Framework for Research Ethics notes that data should be collected with the expectation that others will re-use it (ESRC 2010a). (See Research Information Network (2011) for a detailed review of funders' policies and the funded Sherpa Juliet project (JISC 2009b) for an international inventory of such policies).

While at the level of UK policy there is a clear and growing commitment to data sharing, the extent to which this translates into practice among the wider community of researchers is less clear cut. One way of gauging the ethos of re-use in the UK is through academic debate on this issue which has taken place primarily among a small community of sociologists and archivists. Publications that promoted qualitative data sharing began to appear shortly after 1994 (Corti 1995; Corti and Thompson 1998). These inspired rejoinders about the value and ethics of re-use as a research strategy (Mauthner et al. 1998; Perry and Mauthner 2004) that were then taken up in special issues of a number of journals. These debates have done much to open up the issue of qualitative data re-use to the research community. In the introduction to a special issue in *Sociological Research Online*, a leading qualitative researcher in the UK reflects this changing ethos:

What is particularly refreshing and useful about the articles contained in this special issue is the way that they push past the more moralistic overtones of the 're-use' debate to focus instead on what happens, what is involved, what can and cannot be achieved, when sociologists get on and do it. In the process the articles give grounded and finely grained insights into the challenges but also the potential for qualitative 'secondary' analysis. In their different ways, the articles are qualitatively analytical about 're-use' and they are engagingly reflexive in their arguments. They make the case for

using any qualitative data carefully, revealingly, and reflexively, rather than arguing that a specific set of rules applies to so-called data re-use (Mason 2007: 1.3).

A further important metric has been the willingness of funders to underwrite projects that are fully or partially engaged in data sharing. These include continuing support for the UK Data Archive and ESDS, specific initiatives designed to encourage secondary analysis of micro data (e.g., Understanding Populations Trends and Processes and the Collaborative Analysis of Micro Data Resources), and funding for a number of qualitative data sharing projects (see the Data Exchange Tools and Conversion Utilities (DExT) 2006-8; and QUADS-Qualitative Archiving and Data Sharing Scheme 2005-06 (UK Data Archive 2010). These initiatives have taken place alongside the advent of core funding for research methods and infrastructure initiatives, in particular the National Centre for Research Methods. New depositors, especially major research centres, are also an important signal about attitudes toward data sharing. The National Centre for Social Research is the largest independent social research institute in Britain, with major holdings of public policy data. In 2009, it began discussions with the UK Data Archive to plan for depositing its qualitative data. As a further example, over the past three years a steady stream of QL researchers have sought to affiliate their research with Timescapes and pursue secondary analysis of the archival resources, or to combine their primary research with secondary analysis as a way of broadening the scope of their data and providing a more robust evidence base.

However, there remain many qualitative resources that are not archived centrally but held as independent datasets by the originating teams or institutions, and, it is also the case that much archived data remains under-utilised. This is evident from a number of surveys that have been conducted to attempt to gauge the level of support for data sharing, both in principle and practice. While these often have low response rates and attitudes towards data sharing are in any case difficult to discern from these sources, they do give some indication of prevailing trends. A recent feasibility study into the co-ordination of UK data resources (UK Research Data Service, 2008) found that:

- although only a minority of researchers share data via a data centre, almost half need to access others' data and most share data by informal means, usually peer networks."

The current picture is clearly mixed. Evidence of sharing includes the fact that approximately 1000 data sets are downloaded each year from ESDS Qualidata and this represents only a fraction of the re-use of qualitative data, much of which still takes place informally. Also, panels on re-use are becoming more frequent in mainstream academic events such as the biennial Research Methods Festival. However, criticisms continue to be voiced. For example, a recent special issue of the Australian Journal of Social Issues (2009) devoted to data archiving reports the views of Australian researchers, some of whom oppose data sharing, and such views continue to hold sway among some UK researchers as well.

Overall, the current picture reflects an uneasy tension between pressures to share data, for the benefit of the wider research community and public good, countered by requirements to protect data and confidentiality, for the benefit of the subjects of research and also for the qualitative researchers who both generated and analysed the data. While it is no longer seen as legitimate to protect data because the originating researchers wish to have exclusive use of it, valid concerns remain about how to protect sensitive and confidential data and how to accommodate the sometimes conflicting demands of conducting primary research with the production of archive ready datasets for secondary use. The close nature of the relationship between

researchers and the qualitative or QL data they generate outlined above needs to be taken into account in the way such data is curated and its re-use facilitated. Key factors in the strong move towards data sharing include: making "unmined" data available, avoiding duplication, reduced burden on research participants, greater transparency of research procedures, alignment with open access principles, and recognising that outputs of publicly funded research are public assets (Fry et al. 2008). Equally important are the concerns for protection, codified in the UK Data Protection Act 1998 (and international laws) which intend, rightly, to assure that all data sharing is done ethically. Overall, then, the current environment is challenging and complex, with many general laws, little applied case law, and researchers often subject to contradictory advice (e.g., archives demanding data sharing and research ethics committees calling for data destruction). (For key reports in this debate, see Thomas and Walport 2008; Swan and Brown 2008).

5 Complex Infrastructures for Qualitative and QL resources

Mapping the field of qualitative and QL data resources in the UK is a complex and seemingly never-ending task. Given the wealth of resources and their scattered nature, it would take a dedicated project to provide a truly exhaustive inventory. Our mapping exercise is therefore highly selective. It is probably safe to say that ESDS Qualidata, as a national resource, is a central hub in this network, especially since its incorporation into the UK Data Archive, but it is by no means the only hub, and the network is vast. In part, this is because what might count as qualitative data is so diverse – ranging from open ended responses on otherwise quantitative surveys to large holdings of historical materials, to newly emerging blogs, Twitter and other "born digital" resources. The forms of these data are also highly diverse, ranging from written and other paper resources, visual and audio materials, film and photography, through to web-based and other digital materials. Furthermore, qualitative data for social research is available in a growing number of organisations in the UK. These span libraries, museums, funders' archives, universities, government departments, broadcasting and media archives, independent institutions and organisations, and localised collections held by community or special interest groups (for a comprehensive review see Foster 2004).

One reason for the complexity of the network is its interdisciplinary nature and the obvious attraction of bringing thematically or methodologically linked data together in special collections to increase their visibility and enable specialist curation and ease of re-use. For example, oral historians have produced extensive resources of qualitative and QL data. The Oral History Society website provides information about archives in the UK, including regional collections. A related discipline, discourse analysis, produces its own collections e.g., CHILDES – Child Language Data Exchange and TalkBank. Two major resources with ESRC funding are regionally based, with a remit to develop holdings of locality data for re-use: the Wales Institute for Social and Economic Research and Data and ARK: Access Research Knowledge on Northern Ireland. As a further example, The British Film Institute holds an extensive collection of social historical documentary films that is international in scope⁵.

A dramatic change since 2000 is the proliferation of digital content held in institutional repositories, most often affiliated with universities (JISC 2009a). Timescapes, as a specialist resource of life course data, is one such example. It is currently part of the LUDOS repository at the University of Leeds, which also holds the extensive Disability Archive. Clearing houses for open source repository data are also emerging (e.g., Open DOAR). While such repositories offer immense potential for the curation of specialist or locally generated data, our

initial investigations indicate that, as yet, holdings of qualitative social scientific data in such repositories are limited, and that, where they are held, limited metadata and searching options make these data difficult to locate.

This brief overview reveals the great complexity and diversity of qualitative data in the UK and of the infrastructures in place to manage and facilitate access to these data. The picture is one of a 'mixed economy' with centralised, generic, national level resources existing alongside distributed specialist resources. The latter are valuable in enabling the specialist curation, discovery and re-use of data that take particular forms, are generated through distinctive research methodologies, or that have a particular thematic or substantive focus.

The UK Research Data Service recently carried out a feasibility study (UKRDS 2009) for a national shared data service, as part of which they considered a number of options for the future management of UK's research data outputs. These included, firstly a continuation of the current proliferation of data services and resource with little change in management or co-ordination; secondly, the creation of a highly centralised agency to provide for and manage all new capacity; and thirdly a co-operative service by which the UKRDS would be an enabling framework, working across a range of UK stakeholders and acting as a catalyst for new services and partnerships. The report found substantial research infrastructures existing in 'islands', with limited coherence and communication among them. The authors recommended a co-operative model for future development that would enable good co-ordination of existing data resources and maximum value from infrastructures and services already in place. This recommendation recognises that data is held, and will continue to be held, at a variety of levels, including project level data sets held by the originating researchers, institutional repositories, specialist archives that focus on particular kinds of data (defined by format, methodology, or thematic content) and in national level data centres. Alongside this, however, the need for some rationalisation of existing data services has been recognised, and the development of a more integrated national data service, that could encompass and oversee both generic and distributed resources, is a likely next step in the UK (ESRC 2011).

6 Future Developments

The overview presented here suggests a number of priorities for the future development of qualitative and QL archiving and data sharing. Firstly, there are practical considerations in building capacity in this area in the UK. There is a skills shortage in data curation and management, which is particularly evident given the scale of the UK network. Standards for the management of data and the production of metadata across the network are currently lacking, with metadata remaining inadequate for easy resource discovery. However, a new working group for qualitative data exchange within the Data Documentation Initiative is a promising development. Technical challenges also arise, for example, in curating and organising complex forms of qualitative data, such as audio and video formats, and in developing adequate protection of confidentiality as part of the broader ethical challenges of data re-use.

More broadly, our review of the developing ethos of data sharing and the mixed infrastructure of qualitative and QL resources suggests a number of challenges. The inherent tensions between protecting and sharing data are evident with qualitative data, and become even more acute with QL data. Various strategies may help to further the ethos of data sharing. Further mandating by funders will help, but just as important may be the rise of a new status for data as bona fide citeable research outputs, even enabling researchers to receive recognition in

the Research Excellence Framework for the production of data sets for sharing (such moves are being explored in the JISC Managing Research Data Programme (2010) and in DataCite (2010), among other places). Perhaps just as critical in encouraging sharing and re-use is the further development of new approaches to archiving that are more closely integrated with research processes and that build on dialogue and collaborative models of sharing. This will depend on the specialist archiving of data with distinctive formats, content or modes of generation, to run alongside and complement generic archiving and to act as brokers between the research community and the national level facilities. Such a model has been developed in Timescapes but will require follow on funding to be properly realised and tested.

There are challenges, too, in working across the mixed infrastructure identified above, to ensure that distributed resources develop in consultation with centralised resources such as ESDS Qualidata, enabling special requirements to be met but without re-inventing the wheel. The development of effective co-ordination between generic and specialist resources and across the network of resources is important, and this needs to include the development of key portals so that data resources can be easily identified, described and located. Nonetheless, there are many reasons to be optimistic, even in the face of complex challenges. Common principles for managing and sharing data across all UK Research Councils (and other funders) signal a demonstrable shift toward an ethos of sharing. Nor are such signs only in high places. Recent workshops on managing and re-using data offered by both Timescapes and ESDS Qualidata attracted hundreds of participants. The potential for combining primary and secondary analysis to broaden the scale and historical reach of qualitative and QL research and produce robust evidence for policy and practices is an exciting development that is likely to flourish over the next decade. The provision of well co-ordinated generic and specialist infrastructure to support this development is a vital next step

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Notes

1. Dr. Libby Bishop e.l.bishop@leeds.ac.uk;
Senior Research Archivist, Timescapes Study and Archive, University of
Leeds; <http://www.timescapes.leeds.ac.uk/>
ESDS Qualidata, UK Data Archive, U. of Essex; <http://www.esds.ac.uk/qualidata/>

Professor Bren Neale; b.neale@leeds.ac.uk
Director Timescapes Initiative and Archive, University of Leeds UK
<http://www.timescapes.leeds.ac.uk/>

2. Documents are available on the ESDS and UK Data Archive websites that give details of archiving policies and procedures for these major services (e.g., preservation, back-up and storage information) and extensive information on managing and sharing data (confidentiality, ethics, consent, documentation, etc.) (ESDS 2009; UK Data Archive 2008).

3. Additional articles can be found at <http://www.esds.ac.uk/qualidata/support/reusearticles.asp> and for further publications see http://www.disc-uk.org/publications.html#data_sharing).

4. UK and international qualitative data providers are listed here: <http://www.esds.ac.uk/qualidata/access/otherdata.asp> and UK and international QL resources are here: <http://www.timescapes.leeds.ac.uk/methods-ethics/international-qualitative-resources/>.

Links to these and other data providers can be found here: <http://www.esds.ac.uk/qualidata/access/otherdata.asp>.

Establishing a Qualitative Data Archive in Austria

by Andrea Smioski¹



Abstract

This paper presents the work of the Wiener Institute for Social Science Data Documentation and Methods (WISDOM). Since 2008 WISDOM, the national quantitative data archive, has endeavoured to set up an archive for qualitative data. A feasibility study was conducted to evaluate the number and condition of available datasets. Moreover, researchers were surveyed about their willingness to deposit and use archived data. This study as well as a following project, aimed at transferring data from the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Vienna to the archive, show that researchers have serious concerns about sharing and archiving data. Ethical and methodological questions were raised. In addition, obstacles such as time-consuming data preparation and the agreement of funding agencies were mentioned.

Since there exists neither an archiving policy in Austria that obliges researchers to deposit their data in a repository nor a culture of data sharing, we are confronted with many obstacles that have to be overcome. Our successes and challenges in starting a qualitative archive shall be described here in greater detail.

Keywords: qualitative data, archiving, data documentation, secondary analysis, establishment of a qualitative archive

Background

The documentation and archiving of social science research data in Austria started in the 1980s. In 1985, Anton Amann and Anselm Eder, members of the Institute of Sociology at the University of Vienna, Ernst Gehmacher (Institute for Empirical Social Studies, IFES) and Heinz Kienzl (Austrian National Bank), founded WISDOM, the Wiener Institute for Social Science Data Documentation

and Methods (WISDOM, n.d). The Ministry of Science and Research supported these efforts. In close cooperation with the University of Vienna and Austrian commercial institutes for market and social research, such as IFES and the Fessel Institute for Market Research, they started to acquire, process and distribute social science survey data. In the 1980s it was relatively easy to acquire data. Bureaucratic and administrative burdens were low and data protection did not pose noteworthy problems. Since then WISDOM has acquired 868 quantitative datasets. More than 480 are adequately processed and documented. They are easy to access in an online catalogue and available for secondary users in digital format. In addition to smaller studies WISDOM holds major national and international public opinion surveys such as the Austrian Social Survey and the Microcensus, which are repeated at regular intervals. Other datasets, such as the ISSP² and

WISDOM holds major national and international public opinion surveys

the Eurobarometer³ are also available at WISDOM. In the early 1990s WISDOM became a member organisation of CESSDA, the Council of European Social Science Data Archives and thereby became the acknowledged national social science data repository in Austria. Furthermore, in 2001 WISDOM became the national co-ordinator for the European Social Survey (ESS).

In 1984 Bettina Schmeikal established the Social Science Information Center (SOWIS) at the library of the Vienna University of Economics and Business. SOWIS operated a database with detailed information about social science research projects in Austria. In 2006 WISDOM incorporated SOWIS under the new name Research Documentation Social Sciences (FODOS)⁴, which also feeds data into the German-language documentation database of the Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences (GESIS, n.d). Finally, in 2007 WISDOM began to extend the scope of acquired data to also include qualitative datasets and datasets with mixed

method designs. This required different expertise and standards. Tools for data management had to be adapted or newly designed. Data protection as well as confidentiality issues had to be addressed in response to researchers' worries and fears in relation to qualitative data archiving. These had been revealed in the course of a feasibility study conducted by WISDOM in 2008. Until now and even with joint efforts with the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Vienna it has proven difficult to acquire qualitative datasets. Besides confidentiality issues and the fear of misuse, data has come to be regarded as the personal property of researchers or institutions. Due to increasing scientific competition, they are unwilling to share their data with other researchers or institutions. WISDOM's goal is to acquire as many datasets as possible and provide high quality data and meta-data in digital format for secondary users. Furthermore, a dialogue with the research community is promoted through personal contacts, workshops and teaching courses.

This paper presents the data archive WISDOM with a focus on the qualitative part of the archive. Initial steps to establish a qualitative archive and accompanying problems, the results of the feasibility study, and ongoing acquisition efforts and the resulting development strategy will be discussed in detail.

The feasibility study⁵

In the field of the social sciences, qualitative research has grown more important over the last decades. The long-standing image of qualitative research as the weaker cousin of quantitative research is fading and qualitative research is regarded more and more as an independent research strategy that can reveal aspects of the social world that are inaccessible with only quantitative methods.

Since the 1970s there has existed a broad range of literature on methods of secondary analysis of quantitative data. Important quantitative datasets are routinely stored in data repositories or archives where the data is adequately processed and documented for further reuse. It is common practice to re-analyse and re-consult quantitative research data for different purposes than those in the original research context. Since there are no archives for qualitative data, this tradition of data archiving and re-use is scarcely existent or even possible for qualitative research, at least not in Austria.

The improved image of qualitative research has led to more qualitative research being conducted. A resulting benefit is a growing amount of research material. However, these increasing supplies of qualitative research data are usually stored at offices, researchers' homes or worse, lost in the "data cemetery" and therefore more often than not unexploited and un-used after the initial enquiry. As a consequence, there exists practically no culture of re-use, and new studies seldom build on the empirical results of previous studies to gain deeper insight. Qualitative longitudinal studies or comparison studies are virtually impossible. Researchers have to reinvent the wheel over and over again.

However, in spite of all this there have been some positive developments. ESDS Qualidata, a British qualitative data archive, together with other qualitative archives, tries to nurture a culture of sharing and re-using qualitative research data in Europe. They have already achieved some successes, most notably by supporting the data archiving policy that obliges leaders of projects funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) to offer their data—regardless of format—to an archive. Austria, amongst other countries, is trying to take its first tentative steps in a similar direction.

We started with an evaluation of international achievements in the field of qualitative data archiving. We tried to assess which archiving tools and standards could be applied from quantitative to qualitative data, what standards could be easily introduced that take into account the particular needs of qualitative data, and which resources and existing expertise could be adapted. The next step was to raise funds to finance a feasibility study. Finally in 2008, the Austrian Federal Ministry of Science and Research provided the means to conduct this study. The goal was to assess the possibilities of and chances for starting a qualitative social science data archive based on WISDOM's existing infrastructure and experience with data archiving. A quantitative online survey provided an overview of the amount and types of social science research data in Austria, as well as researchers' views about depositing their data in an archive and using archived data for secondary analysis. Expert interviews and workshops deepened the insights gained through the quantitative survey (Müller et al. 2008).

The online survey was targeted at researchers who had done qualitative or mixed methods projects. The design of the questionnaire was largely based on a similar study conducted by the German Central Archive for Empirical Social Science Research at the University of Cologne and the Archive for Life Course Research at the University of Bremen in 2003/04 (Opitz and Mauer 2005). We divided the questionnaire into three connected parts: (1) available data resources (2) secondary use of qualitative data and (3) interest in a qualitative data archive in Austria. The questionnaire was available from March to June 2008 at the WISDOM homepage. We alerted researchers to the questionnaire through mailing-lists; 183 of the 386 responses received could be used for the analysis.

The results showed that interviews and images are the most important data sources for qualitative researchers in Austria. Moreover, they revealed that of all the project data (information on about 1.097 projects conducted since 2000) 56,1% are stored at offices, 25,9% at researchers' homes and only 7,9% in an appropriate archive. 6,5% of the data are already lost⁶. As a consequence, the accessibility rate is very low, around 10% for all kinds of data, even lower for interview data, group discussions or data from observations.

Important criteria for archiving and reuse are the condition of data documentation and the data format. One-third of the data is available in digital format, one-third in printed format and the last third in audio and video format. Only about 45% of the data are sufficiently documented (background and project information) and processed (transcribed and made anonymous). This implies a lot of additional work remains to be done if data are to be archived. The archive can take on some of this work, but as a matter of course we are dependent on the support of researchers to manage and document their data comprehensively, especially in the future when the archive expands from its early stages and more and more datasets will be deposited.

In relation to the secondary use of qualitative research data the analysis revealed that over 60% of the respondents already re-used their own data and almost 40% used their colleagues' data. This was quite surprising, since there is very little discussion of secondary analysis of qualitative data in the literature on methods. Another extremely positive result was that over 90% of the respondents are willing to re-use data in the future and will take the secondary use of archived datasets into consideration for future research projects. The benefits of secondary analyses such as the possibility of comparing datasets, presenting a starting point for further analysis, simplifying interdisciplinary exchange, the possibility of extensive use of otherwise unexploited data, and meta-studies or methods development are all deemed very

important. As a next step, we asked researchers for the conditions that would have to be fulfilled to make data attractive for re-use. Most important were the guarantee of data quality and the application of standardised quality criteria. Other priorities such as compliance with data protection, extensive documentation and the processing of data, as well as easy access to digital data were also mentioned.

Concerning the interest in a qualitative data archive in Austria the overall picture was encouraging. Researchers show willingness to archive their qualitative data. 77,8% of the interviewed researchers think their data to be highly suitable for secondary use, 70,7% of the researchers can imagine depositing research data from finished and ongoing projects in an archive and more than 80% can imagine archiving data from future projects.

Nevertheless, most researchers would agree to deposit their data in an archive only under certain conditions. They want to know when and how the data is to be used by secondary users and some would like to have the opportunity to co-operate with users of their data. Moreover, researchers want assurance that secondary use would be limited to bona fide researchers conducting academic research. Informed consent of research subjects and anonymisation are perceived as crucial for archiving project data. The agreement of funding agencies, correct citation, monetary compensation and no interference with their own subsequent use of the data are also stated as important factors in the decision to archive data.

However, even if all these conditions are fulfilled, scientists still have reservations that might in the end deter them from actually depositing their data. The quantitative analysis revealed data protection issues and the fear of misuse as the most important objections against archiving qualitative data. Also scientific competition is ranked very high as an impediment. Other reasons concern context sensitivity and specificity of qualitative data. Lastly, also, the funding agencies as data owners and the amount of work involved in preparing the data for archiving are mentioned as hindrances.

Qualitative interviews with experts confirmed and deepened our understanding of these survey results. Again, data protection, data context and documentation, as well as data quality were the highest priorities. Time and money for data processing was another major element of the discussions. The interviewees expressed a need for regulations and restrictions to be imposed on the archive in order to overcome their concerns. Trust was an important topic that showed through all the interviews. There is no accepted and well-known archive for qualitative data, and the necessary culture for data sharing has not yet been established. Therefore, researchers still lack the confidence in such a project.

This result was substantiated by the experiences we gained in three workshops conducted in the university towns Vienna, Graz and Salzburg. Participants strongly supported the idea of an archive for qualitative data but when the question of the location of this archive came up, all of them promoted small local infrastructures that already existed. They felt they would not lose control over their data if they kept them "near" and in archives they had already come to trust. As a result they all opted for decentralized archives under the umbrella of a central institution which would coordinate and manage the data inventory and offer centralised access to the data.

The conclusions that were drawn from the results of the feasibility study for the further course of action comprised: (1) defining key aspects of qualitative archiving, for example depending on the type of data with regard to content, format, qualitative/ quantitative, etc., (2)

developing criteria for the quality evaluation of the data, (3) utilising experiences from quantitative data archiving at WISDOM as well as existing international qualitative data archives to develop standards for qualitative data documentation, (4) addressing and debating issues of confidentiality and data protection on a broader level, (5) establishing cooperation between WISDOM and decentralized local data archives to better address researchers all over the country, (6) intensifying knowledge and offering courses on qualitative data archiving and reuse, and (7) advocating changes in national policies to support data archiving and sharing.

The current situation for acquiring and sharing data in Austria

The data acquisition policies of existing archives support the principles of data sharing and open access to research data. Data sharing is expected to advance research and scientific ethics, quality of research and learning, and to make more efficient use of public funding. However, the level of support for data sharing is uneven among countries (Laaksonen et al. 2006). In Austria there is no national policy on data archiving and sharing and therefore, a research culture for archiving and sharing research data for secondary use has not gained ground so far. There are no legal requirements requiring that research data be transferred to archives, not even in cases where research projects are publicly funded. WISDOM continuously presses this concern in negotiations with ministries and funding agencies but so far to no avail.

Due to the structure of the scientific employment situation many researchers feel utterly overburdened by the combination of research, teaching and administrative tasks. Under these conditions it seems unlikely that an archiving project will become widely accepted without adequate policies on data archiving and sharing. Interviews with researchers revealed that there is hardly any spare time available for preparing and processing the data so they can be archived properly. Even in cases where the idea of archiving is strongly endorsed, researchers feel they do not have the necessary resources in time, money or staff to fulfil the requirements of basic documentation and data processing. Therefore, an archiving project depends mostly on single researchers who are willing to support the project at their own expense.

This results in a very slowly growing pool of archived datasets and thus limited possibilities for researchers who browse the data catalogue for possible datasets to reuse. There are additional implications: researchers find that there are very few datasets available at the archive and after a few unsuccessful tries, they stop relying on the archive as a source of suitable data. Consequently, trust cannot develop and new datasets remain hard to acquire. To put an end to this vicious circle we initiated a second project shortly after completing the feasibility study.

From September 2008 to February 2009 we ran a project in co-operation with the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Vienna⁷, which aimed to take stock of and evaluate the growing pool of research data available at the Faculty and to transfer these data to the archive (Müller et al. 2009; Richter et al. 2009)⁸. Objects of investigation were dissertations and third-party funded projects at the Faculty of Social Sciences. They were examined and evaluated according to their suitability for archiving.

Furthermore, it was hoped that expert interviews with leading professionals from the Faculty would reveal especially suitable datasets and encourage a dialogue between the research community and the archive as well as a discussion about data archiving and sharing in general. Last but not least, measures were to be developed to prevent

any further loss of data generated at the Faculty and to ensure the future availability of existing qualitative data for research and for teaching purposes.

We started the project by examining existing qualitative and quantitative data resources. Dissertation projects from 2005 to 2009 were listed as well as third-party funded projects of the same time period. Dissertations were divided into three groups according to the methodological approach used:

It is evident that the vast majority of dissertations made use of qualita-

	Qualitative	Quantitative	Qualitative - Quantitative (mixed methods)
In Sum	82	15	56
Social and Cultural Anthropology	20	0	7
Political Sciences	30	10	30
Communication Sciences	10	2	16
Sociology	22	3	3
n = 153			

Table 1: Methodological approaches according to disciplines

tive methods or at least mixed methods designs. Solely quantitative projects are the minority. The same pattern did not hold for third-party funded projects, but a stronger tendency towards qualitative or mixed methods designs is beginning to show there as well. The second issue that immediately became visible were the differences among the disciplines. Social and Cultural Anthropology has a standing of its own, with a focus on qualitative methodologies. This difference not only emerged in the statistical data, but was also broached in the expert interviews later on in the project. Research methods also varied across the disciplines. Communication Studies and Political Sciences are more reliant on document analysis and the latter also on expert interviews, whilst Sociology and Social and Cultural Anthropology work more with in-depth and biographical interviews. This has implications for archiving as well. Different kinds of data have to be handled differently. Biographical interviews for example can be more difficult to anonymise than expert interviews.

In a next step we worked out evaluation criteria to assess the pool of projects according to their suitability for archiving and re-use. Important criteria were: (1) the data had to be primary data, (2) adequate description of methodological procedures had to be available, (3) documentation had to provide transparency of theoretical foundations of the project, (4) comprehensive documentation was also needed of the data itself (information about data collection situation, sample design, documentation of key decisions, etc.). We found that for both dissertations and third-party funded projects it is not common practice to fully document (methodologically or theoretically) a research project so it could be properly archived and would be easily comprehensible for other researchers. Often, there is too little information about concrete research methods, sample design, or theoretical considerations and their consequences. In addition, the documentation of the projects is often incomplete and not all data is available, due to dispersed project members or technical problems. Hardly anyone generates data with archiving or secondary usage in mind. This leads to the conclusion that it is now time to introduce an

archiving policy. Firstly, it could prevent further loss of qualitative research data. Secondly it would enhance transparency and provide good documentation and therefore improve the quality of research and research outputs.

We then contacted the authors of positively evaluated dissertations to negotiate data deposition. At the same time expert interviews and negotiations with project leaders from third-party funded projects took place. Interestingly, the different methodological approaches of the four disciplines at the Faculty seem to result in different attitudes

towards data sharing. Social and Cultural Anthropology proved to be a special case since anthropologists mainly use anthropological fieldwork as a research method. Observational methods are more typical and often entail a long term fieldwork and close relationship with research participants. That relationship with the research subject is something very central to anthropological

field studies. The transfer of data to someone else, even another researcher, can be considered a breach in confidentiality. Sociologists on the other hand seem to be more familiar with the idea of data archiving and re-using. Some of them have even re-used data themselves. The firmly established tradition of archiving quantitative data in sociology probably causes a greater openness to the idea of sharing qualitative data in contrast to Social and Cultural Anthropology where the focus primarily lies on qualitative methods. It is not surprising that amongst sociologists we found the highest approval of and support for our project. Political scientists often use single expert interviews as foundation or substantiation for their theses. They stand alone and the projects and dissertations were therefore often classified as not suitable for archiving.

Finally, the empirical data we acquired was processed and made available in digital format for secondary users. Since we received not only digital data but also data in printed and audio format, as well as incomplete, un-transcribed and un-anonymised data, this often meant tremendous effort of data processing mainly by the archive. For data description we used the DDI related meta-data standards⁹ we already had in use for the documentation of quantitative data. Obviously, we had to adapt the original information fields to the specifics of qualitative data (e.g., kind of interview data, detailed description of data collection situation, processing information, etc.¹⁰) and elaborated the confidentiality declaration. Moreover, we developed data deposition forms, end user agreements and comprehensive user guidelines addressing all relevant topics of archiving and sharing research data, especially data protection and confidentiality issues.¹¹

The success of the project in acquiring data was relatively modest. Altogether, we were able to get data from eight small scale projects, seven qualitative and one quantitative. Even working in co-operation with the Faculty in a data archiving project it was not possible to overcome the reservations many researchers felt towards archiving

their data. Though most mentioned concerns about data protection as well as confidentiality, first and foremost, too little time for data processing and restrictions by funding agencies impeded actual data deposition. Still a good share of the interviewees emphasized that they would like to browse sample studies and to get more information on data archiving and sharing before depositing “their” data in the archive. This is a clear sign that trust has yet to be established and that researchers have to be encouraged to actively join the growing but still emergent dialogue about data archiving and sharing. On the other hand, we received several unexpected and spontaneous offers of support. We were presented with opportunities to present our work in methods courses and to run workshops at Faculty facilities. This will hopefully help to stimulate this dialogue and motivate researchers to take an active part in the archiving project.

Development planning and strategies for the future

WISDOM is the only social science infrastructure facility in Austria providing major national and international quantitative studies. Some of them are repeated at regular intervals, for instance the Austrian Social Survey and the Microcensus. Other datasets, such as the ISSP and the Eurobarometer are also available from WISDOM. Concerning qualitative data, WISDOM still has to build up competencies and data stock and gain the trust of the research community in Austria. Despite all the efforts in the co-operative project with the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Vienna, it was not possible to acquire and process many datasets. Since the start of the archiving project in September 2008 we collected seven qualitative datasets, three of which are fully processed and accessible in the online catalogue for interested users. They are very small projects with fewer than 20 cases each, and they all used interviewing methods in the data collection process. There are also participant observation notes and letters. The material is available mostly in digital format (Word, PDF); additionally there are audio files (cassette, mini cassette) from some of the interviews. However, it became apparent that although the archived projects were conducted not long ago, all of the studies were missing some materials which were available only in printed format. In light of this, we must assume that a great deal of additional work for processing will be necessary in the future. Until now no qualitative longitudinal studies have been deposited in the archive. As far as we know, only one notable qualitative longitudinal study (by Larcher and Vogel) was conducted in Austria at all¹².

Since we have started archiving qualitative data only very recently, we cannot provide estimates for the number of users yet. Drawing on experiences with quantitative data, we can say that approximately two-thirds of users are students using the data for diploma or dissertation theses. One-third of the data is used by researchers, mainly from a non-university research background, and a good share of them from abroad.

Along with WISDOM there are some centres and institutes across the country, which – besides other activities – also archive and provide qualitative data on a very small scale. These facilities mainly developed around individual researchers or in the context of institutes and departments, many of which have a contemporary history or archival science background. Datasets are often not systematically processed and are made available only after personal query.

The feasibility study revealed that researchers in Austria would prefer depositing their data in existing local repositories. These could be connected by WISDOM as the hub or the focal point, and WISDOM would undertake the responsibility for evaluating, acquiring, processing and documenting data as well as setting access conditions, transferring and publicizing data (Corti 2000). ESDS Qualidata, an established

qualitative archive in Britain, used a form of distributed network model (ibid.) when it was initially established. The data were held in different repositories all over the country and distributed to users from the different sites.

We are currently working on a networking project similar to ESDS Qualidata, funded by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Science and Research. The aim is to build up a network of national data archives with WISDOM as the connecting umbrella organization and also to develop common standards and tools for acquiring and documenting data. Moreover, we are creating a shared platform for users with a comprehensive data catalogue and easily accessible, downloadable datasets. The data documentation will also be available in English so that the path is clear for future expansion of the network on an international scale. In the course of networking negotiations we will concentrate our efforts on acquiring new datasets of big and important national qualitative studies that promise to attract a large group of interested re-users.

Besides this ongoing project we constantly struggle to locate additional funding. At the moment WISDOM is financing the qualitative archive solely with project resources from the Austrian Federal Ministry of Science and Research. This allows for one half-time position covering all relevant fields of work: data acquisition, data processing, user support, networking negotiations, training researchers in archival awareness, promoting secondary use of sources and addressing other important issues of qualitative data archiving and sharing in Austria. Considering that no culture for archiving and secondary use is in place and that funding agencies do not see the benefits of policies on data archiving and sharing yet, it results in a full-time workload for a half-time position. WISDOM is in possession of the necessary infrastructure for qualitative archiving. The problem clearly resides in a research tradition that favours the development of isolated research islands (Kozeluh 2008). This tradition explains the missing legal regulations of funding agencies and the missing commitment of social scientists in Austria. At the moment the situation in Austria is one of segregated research islands with everyone inventing the wheel anew, a situation that is probably not going to change, unless the necessary legal foundations are altered.

Provided that the necessary financial resources are available, the following aims are of major importance in the course of the next few years: (1) negotiating contractual terms and conditions for archiving with funding agencies, (2) identifying and evaluating archivable research materials and arranging for their deposit, (3) promoting and encouraging the secondary use of this data, (4) training future researchers in archival awareness, (5) developing best practice on confidentiality, (6) giving advice on copyright of archived research material, and (7) establishing networks with other national and international repositories for social science research data. As we have long tried to convince funding partners of the necessity of legal regulations concerning data archiving, we are aware that this essential step will continue to be challenging. Long established administrative and bureaucratic ways and common procedures are obstacles that are difficult to overcome and the willingness to improve the current situation is startlingly low. This is true not only for funding agencies, but also for researchers. Therefore, the advancement of archival awareness remains an important objective, both of funding agencies and individual researchers. The acquisition of data and thus the possibility for secondary use depend on achieving this goal. Working on issues of copyright and confidentiality is a significant accompanying measure, since these questions are repeatedly raised by prospective data depositors and are not explicitly and extensively covered in the Data Protection Act or Copyright Act (DGS 2000, UrhG BGBl I 81/2006) of the Austrian court

of law. Finally, this is also the crucial factor determining if further funds can be acquired since it legitimises the importance of our work.

Finally, international cooperation with other social science data archives and repositories might prove important for the adoption of existing expertise and best practice. International cooperation might strengthen claims towards funding agencies and researchers as well as offer the possibility to extend the scope of available data for users. Organisations like IASSIST, CESSDA and the future CESSDA/ERI first and foremost enable networking and the exchange of experience and expertise, which are crucial for the development of this relatively new project of qualitative data archiving. New ideas can be developed jointly, thus permitting the exchange of tools and data. They further assist in strengthening the efforts of national archives by giving weight and legitimation to our efforts to seek funding and increase support from researchers. Without the platforms provided by these organizations, much of the work we do would be destined to remain on a national scale.

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Notes

1. Andrea Smioski, andrea.smioski@wisdom.at. Qualitative Data and Support Services Manager, Wiener Institute for Social Science Data Documentation and Methods (WISDOM), Vienna, Austria. <http://www.wisdom.at>
2. The ISSP is a continuing annual programme of cross-national collaboration on surveys covering topics important for social science research. <http://www.issp.org/> (August 20, 2009)
3. Since 1973, the European Commission has been monitoring the evolution of public opinion in the Member States. http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm (August 20, 2009)
4. FODOS: FORschungsDOkumentation Sozialwissenschaften
5. The final report of the feasibility study is available in German and can be ordered.
6. 3,6% of the data is stored „elsewhere“.
7. The Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Vienna consists of four major study programs: Political Sciences, Communication Sciences, Sociology and Social and Cultural Anthropology. Over 17.000 students are inscribed, which is 20% of overall amount of students at the University of Vienna. Per year about 50 PhD theses and about 600 MAs are finished.
8. The project was also funded by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Science and Research
9. The Data Documentation Initiative is an international effort to establish a standard for technical documentation describing social science data. See, <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/DDI/> (August 20, 2009)
10. We geared to the data description information applied to datasets by ESDS Qualidata
11. The user guides were distributed in paperback at the Faculty of Social Sciences. Furthermore these information is available on the new WISDOM homepage that was re-launched by end of August 2009
12. Manuela Larcher and Stefan Vogel used data from 100 in-depth interviews with organic farmers, conducted in the 1990ies by the Department of Sustainable Economic Development at the University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences in Vienna and compared them to recently collected data on the same topic to evaluate changes in household strategies of organic-farms.
13. E.g. the "Documentation of Life History Records Association" at the department of Economic and Social History at the University Vienna, the "Documentation Centre of Austrian Resistance" (DÖW), the "Department for Contemporary History" at the University of Vienna and others.
14. IASSIST: International Association for Social Science Information Service & Technology. <http://www.iassistdata.org/> (August 20, 2009)
15. CESSDA: Council of European Social Science Infrastructures. <http://www.cessda.org/> (August 20, 2009), CESSDA/ ERI (European Research Infrastructure)

Archiving Qualitative and Longitudinal Social Sciences Data In the Czech Republic

by Tomáš Čížek¹



Abstract

The archiving of social sciences data is not a widely adopted practice in the Czech Republic, mainly due to the lack of a national policy on data archiving and sharing and the lack of feasibility studies for qualitative archiving. Researchers provide their data on a voluntary basis.

Concerning quantitative research, however, hundreds of projects have been carried out that represent a large share of research projects in the Czech Republic. The quantitative section of our archive is well-developed and serves hundreds of users, mainly students. Yet, the situation in the field of qualitative research is completely different. Archiving is not a component part of the research culture and this will hardly change in the near future. The practice of the use of informed consent (particularly in a standardized form allowing archiving) is far from being adopted. Therefore, our archive's qualitative data library has only a limited number of data files and, as a consequence, of users.

Keywords: Archive, Czech, Qualitative data, Research infrastructure

Existing qualitative archiving infrastructure

The infrastructure consists solely of our archive, 'Medard', which, as an independent data library, is a part of The Sociological Data Archive, Institute of Sociology at the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic.

At present, the archive provides a small number of data files (seven), consisting of several dozens of completed interviews. Several other data files are currently in the process of being archived and will be made available in the near future. The data archive is used about ten times a year mainly by the students of social sciences and, rarely, also by researchers. The archive functions as an electronic library, and this is why the data are archived in a digital

Qualitative research has been developing only for twenty years in the Czech Republic

form. Presently, there are transcriptions of interviews and also audio and video recordings deposited there.

As a part of the Institute of Sociology, the archive is financed through its research arm. However, there is only a small budget covering half of one employee's salary. The archive also provides extended electronic counseling in

Czech related to qualitative research, as well as basic information in English, on its web pages (See <http://medard.soc.cas.cz>).

Qualitative research has been developing only for twenty years in the Czech Republic. To the best of the author's knowledge, longitudinal research projects are not widely performed. In the Czech Republic, the only instances of such research were longitudinal documentary films that are available in the form of compact works of art with video recordings (dozens and even hundreds of hours of recorded life histories) but these are not available for studying purposes.

However there is a tradition of oral historical work, notably as a study of life histories somehow related to significant events in Czech history. The Oral History Center has already made several dozens of interviews available as transcriptions in the form of books as well as in an authentic audio format obtainable from the Center (see <http://www.coh.usd.cas.cz/>).

Development planning

The archive has existed already for many years. So far, however, it has been a rarely used infrastructure. It is necessary to extend and revise the practice of informed consent that would allow archiving. The author has been giving lectures at universities and conferences aimed at promoting and supporting the practices, yet the result is only limited. In the near future, we are planning to establish a method of data handling and archiving in cooperation with Charles University in Prague that will be binding for the students of sociology conducting qualitative research. The archive is also involved in the project "Czech Sociology 1945-1968 Oral History". Interviews performed within it are archived in the form of interview transcriptions, audio and video recordings.

Considering the necessity of significantly extending the contents of the data archive, it will be necessary to perform an extensive study of qualitative research in the Czech Republic and, based on its findings, to identify the files suitable for archiving.

The cooperation with CESSDA or IASSIST should, first of all, provide us with the opportunity to become acquainted with "good practice" at other workplaces and, in this sense, inspire our further work. This would mean, for example, support for study visits to established workplaces, or perhaps collaborative involvement in international projects.

Notes

1. Tomáš Čížek
 tomas.cizek@soc.cas.cz
 Institute of Sociology, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic
 The Sociological Data Archive (SDA)
 Jilská 1, 110 00 Praha 1 Prague, Czech Republic
<http://Medard.soc.cas.cz>

Archiving and Disseminating Qualitative Data in Denmark

Kick off for a New Archival Service by Anne Sofie Fink Kjeldgaard¹



Abstract

The article describes the situation for archiving qualitative data in Denmark. Presently Denmark does not have infrastructure for preserving or sharing qualitative data. A pilot project aimed at developing documentation standards is being carried out at the moment. Based on this project and recommendations from fellow data archives with established services for qualitative data, a launch of a service for qualitative data will be made in the near future.

Keywords: Data archiving, qualitative vs. quantitative data, secondary use, barriers for re-use of qualitative data, research culture, data services, Denmark

Introduction

The Danish Data Archive (DDA) was established in 1973 as a national data service for human centred quantitative research carried out primarily in the social sciences but also in medical science and in history. In 1993 the DDA became part of the Danish State Archives. The DDA acquires, preserves, and disseminates machine-readable research data. The issue of archiving qualitative data has been discussed in the DDA since 2000 (Fink, 2000a; Fink, 2000b). The reason for the long deliberation is to a large extent the distinctive nature of qualitative data as well as the researcher's relationship towards the data.

Setting the Scene – Qualitative Data Archiving

Qualitative data is unstructured, without common format, personally sensitive and so on.

"Qualitative data are normally relatively messy, unorganized data."
(McCracken, 1988: 19)

These messy, unorganized data are the product of a personal encounter between research object/ respondent and researcher. Due to the personal involvement in data production the researcher feels responsible towards the data with significant consequences for data archiving and data dissemination (Mauthner et al, 1998; Gillies and Edwards, 2005). This is in contrast to the well-defined structure of quantitative survey-based, de-personalised data material (Kuula, 2000; Rasmussen, 2000).

DDA hopes to take on the obligation as the national repository for data archiving of qualitative data

At the moment DDA holds only a few qualitative studies archived in original format. There is no existing infrastructure for qualitative data archiving in Denmark. However the DDA has for years taken part in cross national discussions, meetings and workshops concerning archiving of qualitative data often led by ESDS (Economic and Social Data Service) Qualidata, at the University of Essex (Corti, 2000).

The DDA hopes to take on the obligation as the national repository for data archiving of qualitative data by setting up a unit for qualitative data alongside the unit for quantitative data. At the moment activities concerning qualitative data are funded by the DDA. It will have to be considered as the DDA is moving in the direction of becoming a data archive for both quantitative and qualitative data if sufficient resources for this development are available.

In Denmark the Danish Council for Independent Research for the social and medical sciences requires data archiving in DDA as a prerequisite for funding research activities incorporating collection of survey data. These requirements on behalf of the independent research councils are core to DDA's activity. At the moment qualitative data is not mentioned in the policies of the research councils. It is our hope and expectation that an initiative concerning a service for qualitative data from the DDA will motivate the research council to expand their requirement to embrace qualitative data as well.

Data Re-use in Academic Literature

Data sharing of major quantitative data materials such as the election studies or the world value studies is carried out informally among researchers as well as formally through the DDA. More and more often data can be retrieved freely available as web resource. However, data re-use is a research practise suffering from a complete lack of literature describing and discussing data re-use as part of the researcher's methodological palette in a Danish research context.

In the Danish research context literature promoting and describing data sharing and re-use as a scientific approach is lacking (Kjeldgaard et al, 2008). This alone is not an obstacle to sharing or re-using data. However, as long as data sharing and re-use remains an informal practice data re-use/secondary analysis will not gain the academic legitimacy that the approach deserves.

Obviously the DDA will have a pivotal role in the promotion of data re-use by adding supporting infrastructure, standards, tools, etc. Hopefully this effort will stimulate articles and textbook chapters presenting re-use analysis as a methodological approach to be positioned as a viable alternative to traditional approaches for empirically based research activities.

Preparatory Steps

A preparatory step in the direction of archiving qualitative data was made in an article by Fink (2000a) in which she points out how researchers' involvement in the data production process (as interviewer, as observer, etc.) is creating an obstacle to data archiving. As a consequence qualitative data is of a nature that does not comply with data archiving and re-use in the way structured quantitative data do. The issues raised in the article were further developed by six in-depth interviews with researchers collecting qualitative data. The interview material was reported by Fink (2000b)². Findings in the interview data were in fact strikingly similar to findings reported by Broom et al (2009).

The article concludes with a list of suggestions about how to handle the relationship between researcher and data archive that complies with the special nature of qualitative data. The following suggestions for a service for qualitative data archiving were made:

Handover of data just after data collection. In this way the risk of losing data or mixing up different versions of the data set is minimised. Additionally, data is handed over at the stage in the research cycle

where the researcher is exclusively focused on data and data quality rather than on analysis or publication as will be the case when he has moved on in the cycle.

Publications integrated in the archival unit of the qualitative data set. Enlarging the archival unit for qualitative data sets encourages secondary users of the data to become informed about the interpretations of the primary researcher. In this way the secondary users are guided towards potential interpretation 'span', that is, taking into account the context of the original research as well as documenting the context of the re-use as well.

Distinction between access and re-use. Due to potential concerns about misuse of data among primary researchers a possibility of limiting access for secondary users can be offered. Access restrictions only allow users to view/browse data and restrict them from performing actual re-analysis of data.

Privileged access. To mirror informal data sharing among colleagues and research partners, primary researchers could be allowed to name persons who could be allowed free access to data.

Personal acquaintance. Part of the resistance towards qualitative data archiving is due to the feeling of personal insecurity of moving into unfamiliar territory. Being personally acquainted with the data archivist will to some extent compensate for this.

Dialogue. The personal contact between the researcher and the data archivist should be founded on an on-going dialogue between relevant research environments and the data archive.

Supervision. Both paper-based and web-based resources should be at hand for informing researchers about data archiving of qualitative data at DDA. In particular, it should be explained that data documentation be made an integrated part of the research process.

These suggestions will guide and inspire the service the DDA will set up for qualitative data.

Future Development

At the moment the DDA has taken on a pilot project together with the Danish National Centre for Social Research (SFI). The project objective is to develop a documentation standard for qualitative data sets that is in line with the needs of depositors, re-users and the data archive. Obviously the DDA will seek inspiration, recommendations and best practices from fellow data archives experienced in the field of qualitative data archiving, especially UK Data Archive and Finnish Social Science Data Archive (FSD).

As mentioned above archiving of qualitative data faces different kind of challenges. The most striking of these are described below.

Research culture for sharing or re-using qualitative data

Neither qualitative data sharing nor re-use is practiced formally in Danish research environments. As mentioned, data sharing in general seems to be something that is carried out informally. Therefore the adoption of data sharing and re-use through a data archive can be expected to be slow. Promotion of data sharing and re-use of qualitative data is a responsibility the DDA has to take on.

Resistance from researchers

Resistance from researchers is often due to ethical and methodological concerns, concern for respondents, handling of sensitive information, disclosure issues, the researcher's active role, etc. (e.g. Fink, 2000b). Furthermore, the data is viewed by some as the personal property of the researcher (Van den Berg, 2005).

Obviously consent for data archiving and data sharing by respondents is also an issue related to resistance. Often it seems that researchers take on a role as the respondents' protector against potential complementary research interest from other researchers. Sometimes it seems that researchers are more protective than the respondents actually expect them to be. It should be noted that Danish legislation does not prevent re-use of data originally collected for research purposes (Daasnes, 2000). An argument that is missing in this debate is the point that it may be a way of respecting to respondents' efforts to make sure that their data can be re-used for further research purposes (Hakim, 1982).

Economic resources

At the moment initiatives concerning services for qualitative data archiving will be sponsored by the DDA. But additional funding is an important issue to be addressed as it is necessary to sustain the initiative with sufficient resources in the future.

Formal organisations like IASSIST and CESSDA as well as informal groups like the Bremen group might be of assistance by providing information, materials and web resources, e.g. presentations of success stories for qualitative data archiving. Additional examples could be from the established world of data archives e.g. from the UK Data Archive or Finland (FSD) or it could from theme centred organisations such Timescapes (See www.timescapes.leeds.ac.uk/) or the Archive for Life Course Research in Bremen (See www.lebenslaufarchiv.uni-bremen.de/). Additionally journal articles making discussing data archiving and re-use of qualitative data sets as well as presentations of actual research projects and theoretical discussions of the issue will be helpful.

To conclude, data archiving of qualitative data is still in an early phase in Denmark. These challenges mentioned above – research culture for sharing or re-using qualitative data, resistance from researchers and economic resources – will be taken up by the DDA. But it is critical to remember that DDA is part of important organisational network that will be able to support its efforts. Thanks to international, European-based cooperation and the preparatory steps the DDA has taken already we feel well prepared to take up the challenge of archiving and disseminating qualitative data alongside with quantitative data in the near future.

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Notes

- Contributor details: Anne Sofie Fink Kjeldgaard asf@dda.dk, Data Archivist and Senior Researcher, Ph.D., Danish Data Archive
- A short summary of the article in English is available by request to the author.



**Bremen Workshop: Qualitative Longitudinal Research and
Qualitative Resources in Europe: Mapping the Field and
Exploring Strategies for Development**

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Sharing and Archiving Qualitative and Longitudinal Research Data in Germany

by Irena Medjedović & Andreas Witzel¹



Abstract

In Germany as in many other countries there is an abundance of experience with secondary analysis of quantitative data. In particular, the GESIS 'Data Archive and Data Analysis' in Cologne has for more than 50 years supported and promoted this tradition of social science and multidisciplinary research by providing the opportunity to use a wide range of social science data for secondary analysis. A similar picture cannot be drawn for the area of qualitative research in Germany. In spite of the growing relevance of qualitative methods since the 1970s, there is no widespread culture of data sharing in qualitative research nor can one find an institution providing a user-oriented data service for qualitative material on a nationwide scale. In view of this situation the Archive for Life Course Research (ALLF) at the University of Bremen addresses itself to the task of improving the unsatisfactory methodological and

data-related conditions through planning for national archival development. As a first step, a nationwide feasibility study on archiving and secondary use of qualitative interview data has been conducted. Drawing on the results of the feasibility study, this contribution reports on the culture of sharing and archiving qualitative research data in Germany, the support for such a service infrastructure, already existing archiving infrastructure, and last but not least, the development planning for the next two years. Due to the ALLF's holdings and the particular value of this kind of data, this overview of the German situation includes a special attention to longitudinal data.

Keywords: data sharing, archiving, qualitative data, longitudinal data, Germany

1. Introduction

In Germany as in many other countries there is an abundance of experience with re- or secondary analysis of quantitative data, which includes cross-cultural or longitudinal analysis of large comparative datasets (e.g. Eurobarometer, European and World Values Surveys, European Social Survey, ALLBUS). In particular, the GESIS Data Archive for the Social Sciences (formerly the Central Archive for Empirical Social Research,) in Cologne has for more than 50 years supported and promoted this tradition of social science and multidisciplinary research by

providing the opportunity to use a wide range of social science data for secondary analysis.

A similar picture cannot be drawn for the area of qualitative research in Germany. There is no widespread culture of secondary use of the existing unique and rich data of qualitative research – especially for transcripts of qualitative interviews – nor can one find an institution providing a user-oriented data service for qualitative material on a nationwide scale. Moreover there is no systematic scientific research on the possibilities and limitations of the reuse and revisiting of existing qualitative information.

These shortcomings are surprising in view of the growing relevance of qualitative social science methods since the 1970s. This is reflected in the increasing amount of qualitative data material being collected and the rapid spread of computing in the sciences, as well as advancements in the development of qualitative data analysis software. These developments, along with appropriate data services, facilitate secondary use in teaching and research.

In view of this situation the *Archive for Life Course Research (ALLF)* at the University of Bremen addresses itself to the task of improving the unsatisfactory methodological and data-related conditions through planning for national archival development. As a first step towards establishing a qualitative data-sharing culture and infrastructure, in a collaborative research project with the *GESIS Data Archive for the Social Sciences*, ALLF conducted a nationwide feasibility study on archiving and secondary use of qualitative interview data.

2. Culture of data sharing and archiving – results from the feasibility study

The *German Research Foundation (DFG)* financed a cooperation project for ALLF and the *GESIS Data Archive* to explore the feasibility of a service infrastructure for qualitative research and to examine the desirability of such infrastructure among the scientific community.

The feasibility study, carried out in 2003-5, aimed to explore whether and to what extent social science researchers can be considered as potential data depositors, on the one hand, and future reusers of qualitative data for research and academic teachings, on the other. For this purpose, it combined a nationwide quantitative (n=430) and a qualitative (n=36) survey of qualitative researchers, using the results to inform the criteria and concepts for archiving qualitative data.

The importance of establishing an archive became immediately apparent from the fact that much research data is in danger of becoming lost. The feasibility study sought to identify the whereabouts of research data from about 1,100 German projects with a total of 80,000 qualitative interviews. The results were re-assuring at first glance: data had been lost from only 13% of all reported projects. But taking into consideration that 60% of the reviewed projects had just finished in 2003-2004 or were still ongoing and that the period under review comprised only the last ten years, the amount of unrecoverable data is already substantial.

Given the situation described above, it seemed surprising that data from roughly one quarter of the projects was described as already archived. However, further inquiries through expert interviews carried out as part of the feasibility study revealed that material described as archived had simply been stored in a room in their institution, which does not fulfil the basic standards of a professional archive. That often means that only original audio tapes or partly transcribed interview texts exist, the material is often not anonymised, it is kept with

inadequate physical security, and that there is no public access to data, or accompanying documentation or cataloguing.

Besides the feared loss of important empirical data, the lack of an archive hinders the development of a culture of secondary analysis in qualitative social research. It is not surprising that reuse, especially of other researchers' data, happens rather infrequently. For instance, results of the feasibility study show that more than one third of the respondents have experience reusing qualitative data, but that in the majority of cases (56 %) this is reusing their own data. A further 20% of secondary use involved data from other sources, e.g. collected by colleagues. Most respondents argued there was no reason or special cause to carry out secondary analysis, indicating that there is little actual experience with the reuse of qualitative data and thus, there is very likely to be a misconception of the advantages of secondary analysis.

The findings concerning the under-utilisation of secondary analysis and lack of insight into its potential as a research method were re-inforced through the expert interviews where a widespread tentativeness or lack of knowledge of the method or the preconditions for its use was expressed. This revealed the need for clarification on the value and purpose of reuse in the context of archival work.

A second group of 18% of the respondents referred to an existing demand for data for secondary analyses and the lack of an archive. This group had not had experiences with reusing qualitative data, either because adequate material was not available or accessible, or because they did not know where to find it. They had at least implicitly considered such an approach, but failed due to the absence of archive or lack of information about reusable data.

Despite existing uncertainty, lack of knowledge and scepticism concerning the opportunities and advantages of reusing qualitative data material, 80% of the respondents were in favour of the idea of building up an infrastructure for archiving their research as a source of qualitative data in Germany. Part of the feasibility study was also to take stock of qualitative material in Germany. Analysis showed a large number of projects based on qualitative interviews, with 60% of the project leaders willing in principle to pass on their data to others for re- or secondary analysis. Moreover, 65 % of the respondents could imagine conducting secondary analysis in the future.

"Just taking the number of project managers interviewed in the feasibility study who signalled a willingness to give their data to an archive, this already adds up to more than 400 data sets which in principle could be archived and thus potentially could be made available for secondary use to the scientific community. Over 60 % of these datasets derive thematically from sociology, political science and educational research and, according to the primary investigators, they are to a high extent usable for further research projects (90 %), and for teaching and dissertations (in each case 75 %)." (Opitz & Mauer, 2005, chapter 12, Translated from the German)

3. Culture of data sharing and archiving – the (new) scientific debate

Compared to the situation some years ago, there is a new emerging debate in the German scientific community about data sharing and secondary analysis of qualitative research data. More methodological work and advice on secondary analysis has been sought (Lüders 2005), archiving and re-analysis as means for 'verification' is being discussed (Reichert 2007a, b; Flick, 2007; Eberle, 2007), and a handbook on

qualitative methodology deals with secondary analysis for the first time (Medjedović, 2010).

This development is mainly a result of (1) the feasibility study which increased awareness, and (2) of our own contributions by publications in scientific journals and books, presentations at national and international symposia, and last but not least an annual workshop on secondary analysis of qualitative data at the 'Berlin Meeting on Qualitative Methods', the main annual event on qualitative research methods in the German-speaking area.

4. Qualitative longitudinal data

As the feasibility study has shown, there is a well established qualitative research culture in Germany. However, tracking individuals over time via longitudinal research designs is not a widespread practice among qualitative researchers, although Qualitative Longitudinal (QL) research is not new (Witzel, 2010).

The *Collaborative Research Centre 186 (Sfb 186)*⁷ "Status Passages and Risks in the Life Course" (e.g. Heinz 2001) at the University of Bremen (1988-2001) was a landmark in the history of German research. The Sfb 186 was a research programme with longitudinal projects on different transitions and status passages in the life course. It is remarkable that most of the Sfb 186 projects carried out mixed method research, combining quantitative and qualitative methods during the research process. In a time frame of more than 12 years some projects interviewed their respondents up to five times.

In the course of the Sfb 186, ALLF was founded upon the recommendation of the German Research Foundation (DFG) to secure and make available the extensive qualitative and predominantly longitudinal data material to prospective users. As of now, ALLF holds approximately 700 qualitative interview transcripts (digitised, anonymised, and documented) from the Sfb 186. Data from a further six longitudinal studies are not processed yet and remain in paper and audio format.

A rough overview of QL studies in Germany shows a relatively large number of existing longitudinal and even panel studies in the social sciences using qualitative interviews, often in a mixed methods approach. Taking our studies in the archive together with those from a retrieval in the databank of the GESIS (http://193.175.239.23/ows-bin/owa/r.gen_form), we found 36 studies (n>10) in the last ten years. Some of these studies have a rather long duration. For instance, the *Hamburg Biographical and Life-Course-Panel* (Friebel et al. 2000) started in 1980 with the first wave (n=252) and finished with the seventeenth wave (n=138) in 2006.

5. Existing qualitative archiving infrastructure

Currently in Germany there are only a few decentralised archives for qualitative materials which partly concentrate on specific topics like psychotherapy, biographies in transition, political culture, social movements, documentations and party manifestos, memoirs of war and post-war time, or natural and environment-protection history, as well as archives for different types of qualitative material like oral-history data, letters, photographs, diaries, biographies, essays, correspondences as well as audio and video recordings. Though in most German archives it is possible to search electronic catalogues, up to now most of the data itself has not been accessible in a digital or machine-readable format. Furthermore, the archives lack basic standards of data management and preservation, and therefore are not visible to prospective users from the research community. Some of the archives

are affiliated with university departments, and many are non-profit associations.

Up to now, there are no policy or procedure materials between these qualitative archives that could be shared. Concerning long-term preservation and long-term availability of digital resources in general, nestor – the German network of expertise in digital long-term preservation – is concerned with these issues and provides guides and workshops for libraries, archives, museums and other institutions and individuals involved in long-term preservation and archiving of digital resources (See, <http://www.langzeitarchivierung.de/>).

6. Development planning

Based on the results of the feasibility study, ALLF intends to establish a central national service organisation for archiving and disseminating qualitative data (*QualiService*). Though centralised, this service infrastructure will also utilise the benefits of specialised resources and archiving, whether by integrating and supporting already existing archives or by thematically and methodically centred data acquisition for our own data holdings. This includes also special attention to longitudinal data which are of particular value for reuse.

As cooperation with experienced archives such as the GESIS-Data Archive is indispensable, a conjoint application for building up QualiService within the *GESIS-Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences – the German institution for Social Science Infrastructure Services* – was submitted in October 2008. Unfortunately, due to the new restructuring of GESIS and therefore new foci of activity, this application was not successful at that time.

Development priorities

Thus, our priority for the upcoming years is to realise the development of basic infrastructure for QualiService and corresponding data management standards locally at the University of Bremen.

1. Therefore, we have applied for project funding at the DFG⁸ together with the *eScience-Institute*⁹ (at the University of Bremen), the *Library of the University of Bremen* (Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Bremen)¹⁰ and the *GESIS Data Archive for the Social Sciences*.

2. Furthermore, we are making contributions to the scientific debate on archiving and secondary analysis of qualitative data by presentations at national and international symposia as well as publications in scientific journals and books. To demonstrate the potential of reusing data as well as to meet unsolved questions and objections surrounding secondary analysis, a research project started to conduct an exemplary secondary analysis that combines several relevant qualitative studies in a thematic field of family/partnership/gender.

3. Last but not least, we have initiated a network for supporting existing specialist qualitative archives in Germany (*Initiativgruppe qualitativer Archive – Langzeitarchivierung und Erschließung qualitativer Dokumente und Daten*)¹¹. The idea results first of all from the enlargement of the data holdings through further qualitative data (e.g. group discussions, texts, documents) and through improvements in the accessibility of data from other German-speaking archives through a central mediation function between those archives and researchers searching for appropriate data.

Barriers

1. In Germany the discussion about the need for a policy for archiving qualitative data is a rather recent phenomenon and includes contributions of the *Bund-Länder-Kommission* (2006), the

Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (BMBF 2009) and the German Research Foundation (DFG 2006; Kluttig 2008). The realisation first of all depends on overcoming the lack of cooperation between academic experts, libraries, archives, and information professionals. Similar to the *Deutsche Initiative für Netzwerkinformation* (Arbeitsgruppe "Elektronisches Publizieren" DINI 2009), a report of the *Alliance of German Science Organisation* (2008, S. 6) suggests that cooperating academic and information specialists should develop technical standards and define the division of labour related to the process through pilot projects. This should then facilitate the establishment of reliable and accessible archives for primary research data as well as the creation of international, interdisciplinary, and inter-operable access interfaces. The *German Council of Science and Humanities* (Wissenschaftsrat 2011) which provides advice to the German federal government and the state (Länder) governments on the structure and development of higher education and research argued recently, that the qualitative Social Sciences and the Humanities should have a comparable position of the development of science-infrastructure like the quantitative Social and Economic Sciences.

2. Unlike the ESRC in Great Britain, the German Research Foundation (DFG), the predominant funding organisation in the social sciences in Germany, does not require researchers to offer copies of their data to an archive within three months after the funding period has expired. There is no national policy that *mandates* archiving and sharing of research data. Although the *German Research Foundation* (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, DFG), since 1998, *recommends* data "shall be securely stored for ten years in a durable form in the institution of their origin" (DFG 1998, Recommendation 7), the responsibility for the data rests with the individual researcher.¹² Often the data is stored in offices or at home, where as a rule it is not accessible for others and where the long-term storage is uncertain.

3. The splitting of the methods section of the *German Sociological Association* (DGS) into a qualitative and a quantitative branch illustrates the fierce competition between qualitative and quantitative research. Also the current situation of ALLF is indicative: unlike in the UK, the USA, or Finland, ALLF is not part of a national data archive, collecting and offering both qualitative and quantitative data. In view of the fact that there are many mixed methods studies, ALLF tries to overcome this gap and facilitate access for users by providing a simplified and improved reference system. This is why ALLF from the very beginning has tried to establish cooperation with the *GESIS-Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences*.

Assistance of existing organisations

A good deal of work in building up QualiService will require establishing standards for the management of data (and production of metadata) throughout the data archiving life cycle. For this purpose we hope to rely on already existing expertise, e.g. provided by CESSDA and IASSIST. Also we appreciate the cooperation with ESDS Qualidata¹³ Timescapes Archive¹⁴ and the Institute for Qualitative Research, Freie Universität Berlin/INA¹⁵.

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 7. Collaborative Research Centres are long-term university research centres in which scientists and academics pursue ambitious joint interdisciplinary research undertakings.
 8. Within the DFG funding programme 'Scientific Library Services and Information Systems' (LIS)
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Notes

1. Contact: Irena Medjedović, imedjedovic@uni-bremen.de, Institute Labour and Economy (IAW), University of Bremen, Germany, <http://www.iaw.uni-bremen.de>

Mapping Out Qualitative Data Resources in Norway

by Gry-Hege Henriksen, Maria Bakke Orvik, Trond Pedersen¹

Abstract

In Norway, history is the research field that has the most experience with digitizing and

ing qualitative data, several Norwegian historical milieus have established infrastructure for qualitative data collections. In addition, *Data on the Political System* at Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD) is an example of a large collection of qualitative resources, however thematically limited. A more general central archive for qualitative social science research does not currently exist in Norway. There are many examples of scattered qualitative longitudinal projects, but as far as we have learned no large archives/collections are made available. NSD is about to increase focus on data acquisition and storage of qualitative data by expanding its archiving routine to all data that are digitally storable, starting by concentrating on the projects financed by The Research Council of Norway. A majority of these projects have an obligation to deposit research data at NSD. One possible direction for NSD in the future is to establish general archiving agreements with major research institutes. Whether project research data can be stored and/or reused is to a large degree determined by what the respondents have consented to prior to the data collection. Therefore it is important that researchers are aware of the possibilities for archiving and reuse early in the research process. The Privacy Ombudsman for Research is in direct contact with a large share of research projects in their initial phases to give advice both with regard to the development of questionnaires and interview guides and formulation of information letters to respondents, and can play a role in this respect. Privacy protection is a challenge, especially for qualitative data

archiving. NSD envisages a common solution for archiving quantitative and qualitative data. Existing routines for collection, documentation and presentation of data will be expanded to include qualitative data. A challenging, but rich new area for NSD, as we see it, is first and foremost, to offer qualitative data prepared for analysis.

Keywords: archiving; qualitative data; qualitative longitudinal data; data sharing; secondary use; Norway Introduction

The content of this article was presented as one of the country reports at the Bremen Workshop held at the University of Bremen, Germany, on 24th of April 2009². The main aims of the workshop were to map out qualitative datasets and resources across Europe and to develop plans for a European network of qualitative data collections, researchers and projects, with particular focus on qualitative longitudinal resources. Delegates from data archives, universities and institutes across Europe attended the workshop representing 14 countries. A few countries, i.e. Finland, Ireland and the UK, had quite extensive experience in central archiving of qualitative data, while the rest divided themselves equally between the groups of "developing resources" and "potential resources". Norway placed itself in the "developing" group.

As far as we know, in Norway no feasibility study regarding archiving of qualitative data has been conducted. Therefore comprehensive knowledge within this area is limited. However, Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD) (n.d) is about to launch an initiative concerning this issue

The Research Council of Norway (n.d) is promoting a national data archiving policy based on the OECD guidelines (OECD, 2007) that state that all publicly funded research data that can be digitally stored should be archived for future dissemination. The Research Council supports these guidelines by requesting that a majority of the projects they finance should be contractually obliged

to archive data. Data from the research projects shall, as a default, be archived at NSD within two years of the projects' termination.

These contract terms give NSD the legitimacy to actively collect data from already finished research projects. Central in the collecting process are emails to project leaders reminding them of their obligations, including uploading of metadata via an online archiving form. This is a routine that covers both qualitative and quantitative research data. Sharing research data is relatively well developed in Norway for projects financed by The Research Council of Norway. Until the project leader or data owner has published his or her findings, the data are usually under embargo.

Existing qualitative archiving infrastructure

History is the research field that has the most experience with digitizing qualitative data, and Norwegian historical milieus have established infrastructure for qualitative data collections. Examples of these are The Digital Archives, Museum of Cultural History, The Norwegian Historical Data Centre and The Documentation Project³.

*Data on the Political System*⁴ at NSD is an example of a large collection of qualitative resources, which focuses thematically on various aspects of the Norwegian parliament, government, political parties, civil service, etc. To our knowledge, a more general central archive for qualitative social science research does not exist in Norway as of today.

NSD is now about to increase its focus on data acquisition and storage of qualitative data by expanding its archiving routine to all data that are digitally storable, starting by concentrating on the projects financed by The Research Council of Norway. We will also update the information about archiving and the archiving form at NSD's homepage.

Archiving of qualitative data can, technically, use the same routines that today are used for quantitative data. But adapted metadata, standardising actions and new tools for analysis and processing are needed. Routines for updates and maintenance will probably stay the same. Preliminary intentions are to use DDI or a modification also for this kind of data (Data Documentation Initiative, 2009)

Qualitative longitudinal data

There are many examples of qualitative longitudinal projects but they are decentralized. Several of these have youth as a central group for study: e.g. their life stories, participation among youth with disabilities, youth and violence/abuse. The life cycle is another central theme. However, as far as we have learned there are no large archives or collections of data made available – nor is there national cooperation at this point⁵.

Development and planning

Within social sciences and humanities, the share of qualitative research is considerable. For instance, 35% of the 216 projects in the Norwegian Programme on Welfare Research (1999-2008) used qualitative data, either solely or in addition to quantitative data. Of these, the in-depth (and semi-structured) interview was the most frequent method, used in almost 90% of the qualitatively oriented projects. One quarter of the programme's qualitative projects were anthropological studies.

Qualitative research takes place in different milieus in Norway – one example of a fairly large research institute is NOVA - Norwegian Social Research⁶. One possible direction for NSD in the future is to establish general archiving agreements with major research institutes like NOVA.

Such a general agreement will include both quantitative and qualitative data – and the "data catch" will be expanded accordingly. In a longer perspective it is important for the data archive to encourage more research institutes to archive data at NSD. Archiving research data is a topic that is discussed at national level with The Research Council of Norway taking the lead (see their work to implement the OECD guidelines).

Whether a project's research data can be stored and/or reused is to a high degree determined by what the respondents have consented to prior to the data collection. Therefore it is important that researchers early on in the research process are aware of the possibilities for archiving and reuse. In Norway, the Privacy Ombudsman for Research is in direct contact with a large share of research projects in their initial phases to give advice both with regard to development of questionnaires and interview guides and formulation of information letters to respondents. The main task of the Privacy Ombudsman for Research (2011) is to disseminate knowledge of the legal and ethical guidelines regulating research

Privacy protection of the respondents is a challenge, especially for qualitative data archiving. Projects that have not obtained consent from the respondents for long term archiving with identification have to anonymise data before archiving. Anonymisation will, in many cases, reduce the utility of data when it comes to reuse. This is especially an issue for longitudinal data.

Up until now NSD has mainly focused on archiving quantitative data. One reason for this is technology – quantitative data have to a higher degree than qualitative ones been suited for digital archiving through well-developed technology and metadata standards. As the technology has evolved, it is now possible to digitally store large quantities of text, photos and video. There is also a lot of development when it comes to tools and software to analyse this kind of data. NSD envisages a common solution for archiving quantitative and qualitative data. Existing routines for collection, documentation and presentation of data will be expanded to include qualitative data.

NSD uses Nesstar⁷ as a presentation utility; this gives NSD a wide range of options regarding how to present data. Data can be published as part of a portal solution for all available data at the archive, as a research programme specific server, or as a separate qualitative collection. The Welfare Web Portal (2011), which is under construction, will be an example of a research specific programme server, with many different types of data, texts, qualitative interviews and quantitative data. A public server will mainly be restricted to metadata, as this kind of individual micro-level data requires an elaborate security system.

The challenge for NSD, as we see it, is first and foremost to offer qualitative data prepared for analysis, as we do not yet have much experience in this field. What is meant by prepared qualitative data? What is the routine of other archives within this field? The specialised competence that is required has to be defined and developed.

NSD is a member of, among others, CESSDA (Council of European Social Science Data Archives) and some members of staff have joined the IASSIST (International Association for Social Science Information Service & Technology)⁸. Through these memberships NSD seeks to stay informed about developments pertaining to technology as well as maintenance of qualitative data (software, organization and routines). These organizations have also secured agreements among the archives regarding access to and exchange of data that benefits the users. In

addition, more specialised initiatives focusing on qualitative data, both acquisition and curation and dissemination are of interest and are welcome.

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Notes

- Gry-Hege Henriksen*, Norwegian Social Science Data Services ([gry.henriksen@nsd.uib.no](mailto:henriksen@nsd.uib.no))
 - Maria Bakke Orvik*, Norwegian Social Science Data Services (formerly at NSD)
 - Trond Pedersen*, Norwegian Social Science Data Services (trond.pedersen@nsd.uib.no)
- *The content of this article was originally presented at the Bremen Workshop held at the University of Bremen, Germany, on 24th of April 2009. The authors Gry-Hege Henriksen (Adviser) and Trond Pedersen (Adviser) work at Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD), Harald Hårfagres gate 29, N-5007 Bergen, Norway. E-mail addresses: gry.henriksen@nsd.uib.no, trond.pedersen@nsd.uib.no. Maria Bakke Orvik is no longer employed at NSD.
- For further information see, <http://www.timescapes.leeds.ac.uk/about/bremen-workshop/>
 - For further information see, <http://www.digitalarkivet.no/cgi-win/WebFront.exe?slag=vis&tekst=meldingar&spraak=e>; <http://www.khm.uio.no/>; <http://www.rhd.uit.no/indexeng.html>; <http://www.dokpro.uio.no/engelsk>
 - PolSys, a collection with search possibilities for Norwegian political party documents includes election programmes, press releases, statutes and the political parties' platforms. Note: Only in Norwegian. http://www.nsd.uib.no/polsys/index.cfm?urlname=parti&lan=&institusjonsnr=3&arkivnr=9&Menuitem=N1_3&Childitem=&State=collapse
 - BIBSYS (<http://www.bibsys.no/norsk/english.php>) contains information on projects and publications, but not data. Contact information to researchers/research milieus (NOVA or others) is easy to find.
 - For further information see, <http://www.nova.no/?language=1>
 - The Nesstar Server is built as an extension to a normal web server. As well as providing all the usual facilities for publishing web content, this server provides the ability to publish statistical information that

can be searched, browsed, analysed and downloaded by users. This is done either by using a standard web browser or using Nesstar WebView. See more at <http://www.nesstar.com/>

- For further information see, <http://www.cessda.org/>; <http://www.iassistdata.org/>

Archiving and Re-using Qualitative and Qualitative Longitudinal Data in Slovenia

by Janez Stebe, Jože Hudales, Boris Kragelj¹



Abstract

This report starts from recognition that the archiving of qualitative raw materials that achieved a status of national cultural heritage, has been part of long established and well elaborated Slovenian national policy on preserving historical materials of national importance. A well established network of regional and national museums and archives operates a service of preservation, and of access for scientific purposes. On the other hand, despite a rich and flourishing tradition of academic (and even private) qualitative research in Slovenia, in most cases all that remains after a project is finished is a research report. Still, besides official traditional archives and museums, there is a range of topic-specific public qualitative data resources, e.g. archives of Slovenian Radio and Television, and some emerging infrastructure for preserving the qualitative data originating from social science research projects (ETNOINFOLAB [<http://www.etnoinfolab.org/>]). Qualitative longitudinal resources for re-use were identified with similar problems as are found elsewhere. In conclusion we observed that the problems of qualitative data archiving are not insurmountable, as generally there is willingness, and much valuable material identified. International and national collaboration could help in optimising resources allocation, and an explicit national policy on data archiving would be a prerequisite for future success.

Keywords: qualitative data, qualitative longitudinal research, oral history, archiving, data sharing, Slovenia

Introduction to report for Slovenia

The state of qualitative data archiving and sharing in Slovenia² is found to be mixed: on one hand, there is an organised network of well operated national archives and museums under state patronage, systematically preserving what remains of Slovenian historical national heritage; on the other hand, there are numerous independent, unrelated, and dispersed research groups and traditions outside of direct state regulation (e.g. university research

the OECD (2007) Declaration on Open Access is on the national priority list

centres, private research institutes, marketing research agencies) producing a variety of original qualitative data collected for different purposes that lack any form of systematic preservation.

After consulting officials and public documents at the Slovenian Research Agency (ARRS)³ and Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology (MVZT)⁴ we have not identified any national policies governing the archiving and sharing of qualitative research data produced by public or private organisations. Also, to date, we are not aware of any feasibility studies for qualitative data archiving, outside of the state owned and managed national archives and museums. Nevertheless, there is a sign of willingness from the MVZT to regulate the area of public domain scientific data sharing and reuse in general, following the principles of OECD Declaration on Open Access, of which Slovenia just recently become a full member.

The archiving of the materials directly important to Slovenian national cultural heritage follow a well elaborated national policy on preserving historical materials of national importance. These qualitative data materials are stored by following strictly defined archiving procedures, well established international standards, and clear policy directions for preserving, archiving and sharing. These materials are of potential interest for various aims of qualitative research. They are available to the public under certain legal rules for their access and re-use⁵.

Despite the fact that a centrally coordinated and standardised professional documentation (information) system is missing, the network of Slovenian museums is currently establishing a national project for the registering of movable cultural heritage, which will finally bring all their collections systematically together, in one place, with a single information service point. Slovenian museums are also following the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH - 2003): they are systematically documenting oral tradition, traditional crafts and skills, knowledge and praxis connected with natural environment, living heritage, life stories in the form of oral histories, etc. as the mainspring of Slovenian cultural diversity.

On the other hand, similarly organized initiatives of archiving are widely missing among state-independent producers of qualitative data: e.g. private, non-government, or scientific research organisations that continuously generate original qualitative data as part of their research projects. In this particular research arena any form of regulation of qualitative data preservation, archiving and sharing for the purpose of its reuse is almost non-existent. The culture of qualitative data archiving and sharing, as part of the research culture, is estimated to be rather low, with little awareness of the potential of data sharing and archiving for its reuse. At best, it is in its early stages, with growing awareness of the richness and value of qualitative data but missing action for its systematic management.

When one of researchers (FSD) contacted for the purpose of this report was asked about concrete experiences of re-use of original material from the qualitative studies, only few could be imagined. These few cases are based on the involvement of a researcher who is willing to make materials accessible from his own past research projects, and make the data available to a new research team. Another example mentioned (MEMO) was about partner research agencies sharing their already available qualitative resources for their common projects. More typical were negative experiences, such as when a researcher would be willing to share the original material from past research projects with colleagues, but it proved to be impossible simply because the data were not properly preserved. As a general practice, the extent of qualitative data preservation here depends on researcher's own standards rather than any established organisational or institutional guidelines. The most common way of preserving qualitative data, if done at all, is by keeping the raw materials in the form in which they were originally collected, or in the form in which the analysis was concluded (FSD, FDV (Faculty of Social Sciences), MEMO, ARAGON). Even in the highest profile research studies, usually there is no systematic or institutionally regulated data preservation policy: raw materials are dispersed between offices and homes without specially designated spaces for their storage.

Such non-systematic preservation means that qualitative data collections often lack methodological and contextual details (study and data documentation, metadata) of the process of data collection that are much needed for judging the reliability and validity of the original data, and the possibility of its reconstruction for the purpose of re-use⁶.

Accounting also for the variety of mixed data formats as one of the most commonly mentioned problems of qualitative data, ranging from handwritten notes, audio and video files, to word processor transcripts, which are not consistent either between or within a single qualitative study, it is often felt that reconstruction of the original research framework and its organisation for the purpose of re-analysis is too challenging a task (FSD).

In sum, an overriding estimate across the research community indicates that original qualitative research materials are very hard to reach in a form suitable for reuse, either because they were not properly preserved, or because relevant metadata information is missing. Agreement from funder agencies as research commissioners, and ethical concerns regarding the privacy of participants, are often mentioned issues that additionally prevent further data exploitation (FSD, FDV, MEMO, ARAGON). Considering the fact that secondary data are rarely completely appropriate to address a new research problem, starting a new process of qualitative data collection often still seems to be the option preferred over considering the possibilities for reuse of existing qualitative data resources. However, the prospects are becoming more optimistic: the OECD (2007) Declaration on Open Access is on the national priority list. The aim is to build relevant national policies for the long-term securing of data resources from publically funded research, and to glean examples of good practice from other countries as the basis for organising qualitative data resources in Slovenia in the future.

Existing qualitative archiving infrastructure in Slovenia

The existing qualitative archiving infrastructure in Slovenia can be divided into three distinct segments with respect to the content of its holdings (subjects, methods and data formats covered). These segments range from (A) several centralised, highly regulated and state managed national archives, (B) more or less well organised but devolved topic-specific qualitative data collections to be found in particular public archives and museums, and (C) loosely managed archiving facilities preserving original qualitative data production, collected for the purpose of genuine social science research projects.

A. State (national) archives

A range of archives run under state control with management and funding provided directly by the government of the Republic of Slovenia⁷. They all share the same competences and fall under the same jurisdiction. They are managed through one central National Archive of the Republic of Slovenia and several additional regional archives that cover their particular geographical areas.

They hold various original resources about the life of institutions, state, society and individuals in Slovenia preserved in the form of written, drawn, printed, photographed or otherwise documented archive materials that are estimated to be of permanent importance for Slovenian national cultural and historical heritage: historical documents on parchment, paper, film, and magnetic or optical data holdings, witnessing important information about the nature, objects, places, phenomena and people relevant to Slovenian national history and contemporary life (e.g., certificates, birth and death records, census data, cadastral registers and maps, and other personal data collections).

These qualitative data materials are preserved and used for national research purposes and historical evidence, as well as for administrative and jurisdiction purposes. Recently there has been a strong initiative to convert them into electronic format and provide them online⁸. There is also a strong emerging initiative to make these materials available to

the public in digital form through an online service: some parts of the archive are already served electronically⁹.

All materials of these archives are carefully selected and professionally preserved following well-established (international) rules and procedures that are shared by all state archives¹⁰. Some of these rules and procedures are (in a limited way) also relevant to other (non-state, specialist-focused) archives and can serve them by providing a possible model of good practice (see Appendix 2, Table 1).

B. Other topic-specific public qualitative data archive resources

Among other topic-specific public qualitative data archive resources we list particular data collections (see Appendix 2; Table 2) which do not fall directly under the state archiving policy regulations, although the government of the Republic of Slovenia still provides the main source of their funding¹¹. They are more or less autonomous and are independently managed by scientific, education or information institutes such as institutes or museums that run under special government licence.

These independent public qualitative data resources share distinct competencies and are preserving material in their specific area of activities, covering substantive areas of interest. They follow their own idiosyncratic¹² archiving rules based on their specialised subjects. Each of them holds their own original subject-specific evidence, in subject-specific formats, for subject-specific use (primarily social and biographical historians, or the general public at occasional exhibitions).

For example, the archives of Slovenian Radio and Television (RTVSLO) can be seen as a very rich and relevant source of qualitative data. This archive does not fall under the same policy rules as the national archives, but is otherwise systematically well-organised, preserving video and audio materials of all the TV production broadcast on Slovenian national radio and television. The accessibility of these multimedia materials is not under any strict rules and much of the national radio and television broadcast is directly accessible through their Internet multimedia archive centre, while an advanced search engine within the video content is under development but can be tested online¹³.

Among relevant organized initiatives of archiving of national heritage on the state side three other projects of digitization of national cultural heritage supported by the Ministry of Culture must be mentioned¹⁴: DLIB – Digital Library of Slovenia is part of the National and University Library (NUK), KAMRA – Digitalised cultural heritage of Slovenian regions and SISTORY – digitization of Slovenian historical literature and historical sources as part of Slovenian cultural heritage. SISTORY is managed by the Institute for Contemporary History in Ljubljana and takes the form of a database available for the whole research community, with historians as the primary users. It also takes part in DARIAH – Digital Research Infrastructure for the Arts and Humanities which tries to provide a coordinated infrastructure for supporting preservation of cultural heritage in Europe (Lazarević and Vodopivec, 2007). DLIB is probably also the place for a future Internet archive.

C. Archiving infrastructure for preserving the production of qualitative data originating from social science research projects

This section explores qualitative data archiving facilities that are especially devoted to preservation of qualitative data from social science research projects. These do not cover the artefacts relevant for Slovenian national heritage, but rather all independently produced

qualitative data sources emerging from public, academic or scientific research initiatives.

First attempts of practice in archiving special, research-oriented qualitative data collections can be noted at the Department for Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Ljubljana by a project, ETNOINFOLAB, which strives to organise and centralise the department's documentation service system (including all qualitative data collected by the students during their study or by researchers working at the institute) and provide the available qualitative data sources for its staff and interested researchers as well as the wider public, over a single computer system together with applications for data storage and re-use.

These are small in scale and are managed and financed autonomously by the research institutes alone, following their own particular and idiosyncratic qualitative data archiving rules. They hold rather limited numbers of qualitative data collections as they are still in the process of developing the proper qualitative data archiving and sharing infrastructure: mainly they contain ethnographic research materials (transcripts of interviews, copies of photographs) and limited amounts of other diverse data formats resulting from qualitative social science research. Re-use of these data is in general limited to a closed circle of academic researchers (most commonly used by students and professors for teaching).

Social Science Data Archives (ADP - Arhiv Družboslovnih Podatkov)¹⁵, as the main quantitative data repository in Slovenia, endeavours to extend its services more intensively into the qualitative domain: it is already holding data from a few qualitative studies and plans to broaden its activities in this direction. The analogous processes for quantitative data are used for qualitative data. Digitised primary research material of a qualitative study, at this time limited to textual data, is preserved as is raw data in quantitative studies. Studies are catalogued using the Data Documentation Initiative metadata standard (DDI)¹⁶ for study description. Terminology used is method specific, e.g. when describing kind of data and research instrument used. ADP is subsidized by ARRS long-term research infrastructure grant. Its mission is to be responsive to the demands of the general social science research community both nationally and internationally. It has been under development for more than ten years, and has thus acquired extensive professional knowledge on data archiving rules upon which to build its services. It offers data free for scientific and educational purposes and uses internationally recognised standards and procedures in acquiring, preserving and disseminating the data. It is also a member of international organisations and partners in their projects (Council of European Social Science Data Archives (CESSDA), International Federation of Data Organizations (IFDO)). These attempts have the potential for establishing the foundation for a genuine qualitative data infrastructure upon which to build in the future.

While only these two facilities are already active in providing qualitative data sources for reuse (either in electronic or hard copy), there are also several other existing public (qualitative research oriented) organisations generating an important amount of qualitative data without any form of systematic preservation. These are listed in Appendix 2 as a relevant source of qualitative data to be potentially integrated into a proper qualitative data archiving infrastructure in the future.

D. Private archives or facilities for preservation of qualitative data of private research agencies

The remaining category in our classification is another important source of qualitative data production: private research organisations

such as marketing research agencies, advertising companies, or public relations offices. They produce a mass of ad-hoc qualitative studies generating a large quantity of data without any real consideration for its integral, systematic and organised preservation which would enable its later re-use. Despite the existing legal framework for its establishment, we have not found any evidence of private venture activities for qualitative data archiving¹⁷ that would enable data to be shared more widely. The main reasons for this are always given as personal privacy protection laws and the problem of property rights of the data, which belong to private companies that are not willing to share what is often perceived as confidential business data (ARGON, MEMO), even if examples exist of quantitative data from private sector, stored in ADP. Some private research agencies (ARAGON, for example, from 2008 onwards) have started to build their own private data archives, systematically preserving all the data originating from quantitative as well as qualitative studies conducted by them. However, these data sources in any case remain unavailable for further exploitation by external users. The majority of qualitative data sources originating from the private sector, which are rich in content, diverse in formats and large in number (but of variable quality) now remain dispersed without any central node for their coordination, preservation and potential reuse.

Qualitative longitudinal data in Slovenia

By their nature, the majority of state managed and specialist archives of qualitative data that are concerned with the preservation of Slovenian culture are by definition longitudinal. This type of qualitative data indirectly addresses social temporality in terms of bearing witness to its time.

For example, since 2003, a Museum of Contemporary History (Kokalj Kočever, 2005) is systematically collecting oral life stories and memories (in video and audio formats) about 20th century Slovenian history (the project is mainly aimed at capturing the period of the first and second World Wars). Some of these materials are already accessible to the public, in digital format and directly over the internet, for example Mojzgodba, www.radio.ognjsce.si and www.usmmm.org/research/collections/oralhistory/search.

As another example, the Sistory project¹⁸ was launched at the Institute for Contemporary History to provide a coordinated infrastructure for supporting preservation and sharing of national cultural heritage (Lazarevič and Vodopivec, 2007). Relevant national historical documents are becoming widely available from a single common access point for the research community at large. The information system allows for browsing or searching for scientific papers, reports and discussions published in Slovenian historical publications (printed and electronic) on various periods of Slovenian history. There is also open access to some of the historical databases containing visual materials and maps. A similar recent project that issued a public call for lay memories of Tito's funeral promises to archive the material collected¹⁹.

On the other hand, these are not conceptually designed, longitudinal data that would have resulted from problem-oriented, qualitative research studies directly addressing time, temporality, or prospectively tracking changes over time. In the area of originally produced data by social science research from the autonomous social science or private research organisations described above, we are aware of two longitudinal infrastructures for the management and re-use of longitudinal data. These are the already mentioned Social Science Data Archives and ETNOINFOLAB, the first holds mainly quantitative data sources, some of which are longitudinal.

ADP holds numerous repeated cross-section studies (time use studies, media use studies, social values studies), some of which are in the form of internationally harmonised, continuous longitudinal datasets²⁰. Occasionally there are minor follow-ups on the same sample²¹. Finally there are also limited panel or continuous cross-section data available²². However, ADP does not hold data from any kind of qualitative longitudinal study.

Something close to qualitative longitudinal data can be found in the archiving infrastructure of the ETNOINFOLAB documentation service, provided by the Department of Ethnology and Social Anthropology at the Faculty of Arts – UL. ETNOINFOLAB (Ethnographic Information Laboratory) started in 2006 as the project for systematically regulated digitization of extant ethnographic data collections and their integration into a single common database, mainly comprising interviews (voice transcriptions in text format) with accompanying photos. The collections cover topics that range from material, social and spiritual culture in Slovenia as reflected in the everyday life of individuals, and encompassing the time period from the 19th century until the present day. The most important collections in ETNOINFOLAB were created by:

- Ivan Benigar, a South American Anthropologist working among the Mapuce Indians in Patagonia, Argentina;
- Joel M. Halpern, a prominent American cultural anthropologist who has conducted community studies in two Slovenian villages;
- Vekoslav Kremenšek (1930) and Vilko Novak (1910-2002), who have conducted locality and economic migration studies in Slovenia.

Further details of these important qualitative longitudinal resources are listed in the appendix and on the web²³.

All of these qualitative longitudinal data collections are already available via ETNOINFOLAB documentation and information service. Since August 2008 all the collections are listed on the Internet in detail, and many digitised images of original documents, field notes and photographic material are freely available for public use²⁴. In addition, ETNOINFOLAB and its electronic information service provide students with practical knowledge and skills to use the necessary computer applications, as well as processing techniques for data, sound, and film.

Outside of the ETNOINFOLAB only occasional individual research projects involving qualitative longitudinal data were identified such as a small scale student research project collecting family genealogy histories is currently ongoing at the Faculty of Social Sciences as a part of the study process, but its results are still uncertain²⁵. Such dispersed individual research projects based on the collection of longitudinal qualitative data are obviously not yet a part of any of the archiving infrastructures mentioned above, but should in any case be kept in mind for future development of this particular area.

Development and planning

Two major problems in qualitative data resources in Slovenia have been identified: a general lack of qualitative longitudinal resources and missing infrastructure for archiving the existing qualitative data resources originating from independent research projects conducted by public and private organisations. The main reasons for such a situation can be found in the rather low value attached to qualitative research data in Slovenia in general, and a low level of awareness of the potential of data archiving and sharing that prevails within the research community. Also, in general there is a very low level of

knowledge about what qualitative data is available and what can be counted as data archiving infrastructure facilities.

Identified problems and gaps:

- An important reason for the limited systematic organisation of qualitative data resources are, above all, ethical concerns, as is often emphasised by data producers (FSD, ARAGON, MEMO, and FDV). The consent forms used for participation in qualitative research normally allow use of primary research materials for the sole purpose of generating reports for the particular research case, and prohibiting exposure of personal information that may identify individual participants. It is believed (wrongly) that these conditions automatically preclude making the original research materials available to others: strong doubts persist that even with very sophisticated qualitative data manipulation, anonymity could not be achieved for the purpose of privacy protection for the original research material that might be shared. This is one area where established institutions could provide best practice guides and training for researchers to start thinking about data archiving early in project conceptualisation in order to remove any ethical or legal obstacles for future re-use²⁶.
- Another reason for resistance to sharing may be found in a tendency toward monopolisation of original research material for the advantage of the primary researcher or agency, which is again in tension with a data sharing. In the case of private (marketing) research companies, which are likely to represent one of the largest resources of qualitative data, the research material is legally owned by the company paying for the research, which makes data sharing even more complicated. Agencies conducting this research have little motivation to resolve such complications to enable sharing.
- An additional problem facing a stronger qualitative data sharing initiative is anchored in the lack of knowledge and professional sound practice among active researchers of how to deal with the task of organising, managing, archiving and sharing data. Despite the availability of data, procedures for archiving are not well-specified and therefore challenging to fulfil. A main obstacle for qualitative data archiving is often simple lack of human resources in the research organisations where there is often very little administrative support for research activities, such as, for example, data preservation after the completion of a project.
- Researchers working alone or in small teams do not tend to engage in data preservation activities as they lack the motivation and often the time for such work. Archiving is unfortunately not perceived as an activity that has the same level of academic prestige and relevance to professional identity as conducting primary research. There is currently no clear professional track of rewarding archiving activities, and people with the capacity to pursue academic careers don't take enough interest in it.

There are also institutional barriers to the development of more dedicated, specialised social science qualitative data archiving infrastructures. For example, existing infrastructures and networks around qualitative research that are centralised at the University of Ljubljana (by far the largest academic institution in the country) were not perceived to be effective enough for taking over the task of archiving. In discussions, it was mentioned that there is a need for stronger coordination and networking of data infrastructures in an interdisciplinary fashion, but currently there is no real interest in such an initiative. ADP was often considered as an institution that could be asked for support

by data producers in the past (FSD), but no further steps were taken in the direction of establishing any formal contract.

Considering the state of archiving and sharing of qualitative data resources in the future there is a need to work on the following development priorities:

- Promotion of the idea of qualitative longitudinal data collection and raising the awareness of the value and benefits of qualitative data archiving and sharing. One possible step in this direction is ADP's organisation of seminars setting out the important aspects of data archiving as part of the research process, and providing an overview of guidelines for efficient data archiving. For this to take place the collaboration of research organisations is required!
- Establishment of a formal appraisal and selection policy that would reflect the future re-use potential of qualitative research material compared to the cost of production, preservation and access. A detailed methodological description of the research process itself should be always undertaken to allow for judgement of data quality for this purpose. It can be estimated that only a limited number of the most valuable qualitative studies (up to 5 per year) would qualify for archiving in ADP. Those remaining could be deposited in a general public research digital repository such as DLIB.
- Preparing a package of procedures for consistent qualitative data archiving, specially dedicated to preserving original materials from autonomous qualitative research projects, taking into account ethical considerations and international standards. This will be available on demand for research organisations to help them organise and preserve their future qualitative research projects throughout the data life-cycle. IASSIST (International Association for Social Science Information Services & Technology) and CESSDA assistance is required for advising on qualitative data archiving regulations, guidelines and standards²⁷.
- Trying to develop a motivation scheme as well as formal requirements to be set out for research organisations and individual researchers to systematically report and organise their qualitative data materials for the possibility of being included in the larger infrastructure for qualitative data archiving. For example, this would include introducing additional scientific criteria that would properly value and reward archiving activities in terms of academic careers. This would require further changes in established institutional rules.
- Acquiring specialisation of human resources in qualitative data archiving within existing ADP. This would require devoting a post for qualitative data resource management, as a point of reference and advice, as well as practical support and management of existing qualitative data from various sources. Additional funding would be required.
- Taking a first step towards coordination of dispersed producers and sources of qualitative data by moving towards establishing a common catalogue of all the existing qualitative data materials publicly available. This should slowly lead to general rationalisation of national qualitative archiving activities and step-by-step establishment of a general single point of access to all qualitative data resources. A set of common standards and rules should be agreed upon to achieve inter-operability and professional soundness of the whole endeavour.

CONCLUSION: How might existing organisations be of assistance?

Support for professionalization and training in the field of qualitative data archiving is needed. The usefulness of ESDS Qualidata training and support materials is already recognised as a baseline for international integration of activities in the realm of qualitative data archiving and sharing. Establishing a stronger organisational foundation within CESSDA could strengthen support for members and spread good practice, e.g. in how to fill in gaps in collections in particular countries, by enabling visits and mentoring facilities in development of new services, and advice and training for researchers and archivists. In particular, the support from the international organisations would be important in the following areas:

- Internationally coordinated fund raising and country research policy formulation activities, e.g. inclusion of CESSDA and DARIAH projects in the future ESFRI (the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures) funding scheme.
- Development of professional profiles and establishment of training schemes to build expertise for qualitative archiving, data sharing and its re-use in terms of secondary analysis.
- Synchronisation of common activities for development of needed tools and processes that would support qualitative archiving and sharing.
- Development of common standards and training in their use (e.g. a DDI "lite" template suited for qualitative data).
- Establishment of harmonised rules based on established protocols and preservation policies that effectively guarantee the long-term access to qualitative data resources.

Extension of the role of ADP is often mentioned as one of the best solutions for preservation and sharing of the valuable qualitative data produced by these research centres (FDV, FSD). ADP is the only science data archiving infrastructure in the country, with a well-established repository of data mainly from large-scale social surveys. As such it has a solid foundation from which to broaden its service to qualitative data archiving in the future. However, its existing data deposit system and data sharing regulations should be properly extended for qualitative data archiving²⁸. In this way ADP could serve as a possible node, with experiences and existing resources in the area of quantitative data, which could be extended or adapted for the special needs of qualitative data, and for building a centrally integrated mixed-methods social science data archive.

An alternative for preservation of these dispersed qualitative data sources is their integration into existing the ETNOINFOLAB service of ethnographic documentation system. Each solution has its benefits. In the first case, a single access point to mixed types of data in the form of a common and centrally coordinated management system for archiving and sharing qualitative and quantitative data that can be reused for any purpose can be seen as an advantage. In the second case the existing qualitative data might be simpler to integrate into already established information systems, thus avoiding the problem of bridging quantitative and qualitative data storage standards. This may result in easier implementation as well as faster service provision to the end users. Closer familiarity with the substance and format of data could be an advantage for this latter option.

In any case these do not need to be mutually exclusive alternatives. Cross-overs between the systems, harmonisation and co-ordination of activities would serve best the common interests. As it is not expected to anticipate an abundance of human and financial resources, all those

willing to spend their energy in establishing an expanded Slovene Qualidata service would be welcomed.

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Appendix 1:

List of other individuals, organisations and their abbreviations for the purpose of the report

- ETNOINFOLAB
HUDELJA, Mihaela, documentalist ETNOINFOLAB
Oddelek za etnologijo in kulturno antropologijo FF (Department for ethnology and cultural anthropology, Faculty of arts, University of Ljubljana)
e-mail: mihaela.hudelja@ff.uni-lj.si
internet: <http://etnologija.etnoinfolab.org/en/default.asp>
- MNZ-SI
KOKALJ KOČEVAR Monika, MA, Museum Adviser
Muzej novejšje zgodovine Slovenije / National Museum of Contemporary History (MNZ-SI)
e-mail: monika@muzej-nz.si
internet: <http://www.muzej-nz.si/>
- FSD
RIHTER Liljana, PhD, Senior Lecturer
Fakulteta za socialno delo / Faculty of social work, University of Ljubljana (FSD)
e-mail: liljana.rihter@fsd.uni-lj.si
internet: http://www.fsd.si/faculty_and_staff/2008050813072178/
- MEMO
PERČIČ Eva, Ma, Research director, MEMO
MEMO Institute - Creative Research d.o.o.
e-mail: eva.percic@memo.si
internet: <http://www.memo.si/index.php>
- ARAGON
PREŠEREN Jana
Aragon, d.o.o., research and planning
e-mail: Jana.Preseren@aragon.si
internet: <http://www.aragon.si/eng/>

• FDV

TIVADAR Blanka, PhD, and KAMIN Tanja, PhD
Center for research on social psychology, Institute of Social Sciences,
Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana (FDV)
e-mail: Tanja.Kamin@fdv.uni-lj.si; blanka.tivadar@guest.arnes.si
Internet: http://www.fdv.uni-lj.si/English/Research/Research_c.asp?id=11 <http://csp.fdv.si/>

ADAM Frane, PhD
Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana
e-mail: frane.adam@fdv.uni-lj.si
internet: <http://www.fdv.uni-lj.si/Kontakti/osebne.asp?id=1>

Appendix 2 (Žumer, 2001)

Table 1: List of Slovenian state Archives holding remains of national heritage

Arhiv Republike Slovenije (Archives of the Republic of Slovenia)

Address: Zvezdarska 1, 1127 LJUBLJANA, p.p. 21
Phone: (01) 24 14 200, (01) 24 14 250
Fax: (01) 24 14 269,
e-mail: ars@gov.si
Internet: <http://arhiv.gov.si/>
NOTE: Slovene Film Archives keeps Slovene documentary films, cartoons and feature films from 1905 (when the oldest Slovene film was made) onwards. More than 90 % of all Slovene films or 5,100 titles are preserved.

Zgodovinski arhiv Ljubljana (Ljubljana history archive)

Address: Mestni trg 27, 1000 Ljubljana
Phone: (01) 30 61 306
Fax: (01)42 64 303
e-mail: zal@zal-lj.si
Internet: <http://www.zal-lj.si>

Pokrajinski arhiv Koper (Koper province archive)

Address: Goriška 6, 6000 Koper
Phone: (05) 62 71 824
Fax: (05) 62 72 441
e-mail: arhiv.koper@guest.arnes.si
Internet: <http://www.arhiv-koper.si/>

Pokrajinski arhiv Maribor (Maribor province archive)

Address: Goriška 6, 6000 Koper
Phone: (05) 62 71 824
Fax: (05) 62 72 441
e-mail: slavica.tovsak@pokarh-mb.si
Internet: <http://www.pokarh-mb.si/>

Pokrajinski arhiv Nova Gorica (Nova Gorica province archive),

Address: Trg E. Kardelja 3, 5000 Nova Gorica
Phone: (05) 30 27 737
Fax: (05) 30 27 73
e-mail: pang@guest.neticom.si
Internet: <http://www.pa-ng.si>

Zgodovinski arhiv Ptuj (Ptuj history archive)

Address: Muzejski trg 1, 2250 Ptuj
Phone: (02) 78 79 730
Fax: (02) 78 79 740
e-mail: Zgod.arhiv-Ptuj@guest.arnes.si
Internet: <http://www.arhiv-ptuj.si/>

Table 2: Topic-specific public infrastructure of qualitative data resources

Zgodovinski arhiv in muzej Univerze v Ljubljani (History archive and museum of University of Ljubljana)

Address: Kongresni trg 12, 1000 Ljubljana
Phone: (01) 42 54 055
Fax: (01) 42 54 053
e-mail: info@uni-lj.si
Internet: http://www.uni-lj.si/o_univerzi_v_ljubljani/univerzitetni_arhiv/amsu.aspx
NOTE: documentation about the work, life and function of University of Ljubljana

Dokumentacija RTV Slovenija (Documentations of Slovenian national Radio and Television)

Address: Kolodvorska 2, 1000 Ljubljana
Phone: (01) 475 36 16
Fax:
e-mail: tvdokumentacija@rtvslo.si
Internet: http://www.rtvlo.si/modload.php?&c_mod=static&c_menu=1053436918
NOTE: audio and video material of Slovenian national television production in electronic form

Narodna in univerzitetna knjižnica - Rokopisni oddelek (National and university library – manuscript division)

Address: Turjaška 1, 1000 Ljubljana,
Phone: (01) 200 11 10
Fax: (01) 4257 293
e-mail: uprava@nuk.uni-lj.si
Internet: <http://www.kud-logos.si/ROKOPISI/rokopisni-anglesko.htm>
NOTE: central national and state-owned collection of original manuscript material from the fields of literature, linguistics and broader humanities dating back to 1774 (available on microfilm, paper, photographic and digital copies);

Narodna in univerzitetna knjižnica - Digitalna knjižnica Slovenije (National and university library – The digital library of Slovenia)

Address: Turjaška 1, 1000 Ljubljana,
Phone: (01) 200 11 67
Fax: (01) 4257 293
e-mail: dlib.si@nuk.uni-lj.si
Internet: <http://www.dlib.si/>
NOTE: a web portal providing ready access to Slovenian knowledge and cultural treasures with offering free searching of text (books, periodicals), visual (photos, maps) and sound resources with respect to Slovenian cultural heritage; new project under development: building a complete archives of Slovenian (electronic) documents on the world wide web.

Arhivi Katoliške cerkve (Archives of Catholic Church)

Address: Krekov trg 1, 1000 Ljubljana
 Phone: (01) 43 37 044
 Fax: (01) 43 96 435
 e-mail: arhiv.lj@rkc.si
 Internet: <http://lj.rkc.si/?id=11&fmod=2>
 NOTE: valuable historical collection of books with birth recordings; important for genealogy research

Muzej novejšje zgodovine Slovenije (National Museum of Contemporary History)

Celovška 23, 1000 Ljubljana
 Tel. 00386 1 3009637
 Fax. 00386 1 4338244
 e-mail: info@muzej-nz.si
 Internet: www.usmmm.org/research/collections/oralhistory/search
 NOTE: huge collections of life stories and memories (in video and audio format) on 20th century history (focus on first and second world war).

Muzej novejšje zgodovine Celje (Museum of Recent History in Celje)

Prešernova ulica 17, 3000 CELJE
 tel.: +386 3 428 64 10
 fax: + 386 3 428 64 11
 E-mail: mnzc(at)guest.arnes.si
 Internet: www.muzej-nz-ce.si
 NOTE: huge collection of audio and video documentation about craft and craftsmanship in Celje, their life stories, etc.

Inštitut za novejšjo zgodovino (Institute for Recent history)

Kongresni trg 1, 1000 LJUBLJANA
 Phone: +386 1 200 31 20
 Fax: +386 1 200 31 60
 E-mail: info@inz.si
 Internet: www.sistory.si/
 NOTE: large and rich internet based electronic service point of historical sources in Slovenia; total access to print and archive sources, databases, visual material and maps.

Table 3: Archives of originally produced qualitative data originating from autonomous social science research projects**ETNOINFOLAB - Oddelek za etnologijo in kulturno antropologijo FF (Department for ethnology and cultural anthropology, Faculty of art)**

Address: Zavetiška 5, 1000 Ljubljana
 Phone: 00386 1 2411 520
 Internet: <http://www.etnoinfolab.org/>
 NOTE: valuable and rich ethnographic data collections (interviews, photos) collected by the members and students of the Department during their research and pedagogic activity dating back to 1956. National territory of Slovenia, Austria, Italy, and Hungary, as well as the republics of the former Yugoslavia and some other parts of Balkan are covered.

ADP - Arhiv družboslovnih podatkov (Social science data archives, Faculty of Social sciences, University of Ljubljana)

Address: Kardeljeva ploščad 5, 1000 Ljubljana
 Phone: (01) 5805 292
 Fax: (01) 5805 294
 e-mail: arhiv.podatkov@fdv.uni-lj.si
 Internet: <http://www.adp.fdv.uni-lj.si/>
 NOTE: preserving a few (around 10) subject specific qualitative studies that are not survey or statistical data originating from autonomous research projects

Table 4: Important research centres as producers of qualitative data without the infrastructure for its preservation**Institutum Studiorum Humanitatis – Faculty for postgraduate studies in humanities**

Address: Slovenska cesta 30a, 1000 Ljubljana
 Phone: + 386 1 425 18 45
 Fax: + 386 1 425 18 46
 e-mail: ish@ish.si
 Internet: <http://www.ish.si/en/>

Scientific Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts

Address: Slovenska cesta 30a, 1000 Ljubljana
 Phone: 386 1 470-6-100
 Fax: 386 1 425-52-53
 e-mail: zrc@zrc-sazu.si
 Internet: <http://odmev.zrc-sazu.si/zrc/>

Peace Institute – Institute for contemporary social and political studies

Address: Metelkova 6, 1000 Ljubljana
 Phone: + 386 1 234 77 20
 Fax: + 386 1 234 77 21
 e-mail: info@mirovni-institut.si
 Internet: <http://www.mirovni-institut.si/Main/Index/en/>

University of Ljubljana – Faculty of social work (delinquency, youth, and mental health)

Address: Topniška 31, 1000 Ljubljana
 Phone: +386 1 280 9240
 Fax: +386 1 2809 270
 e-mail: info@fsd.uni-lj.si
 Internet: <http://www.fsd.si/eng/>

University of Ljubljana – Institute of Social Sciences

Address: Kardeljeva ploščad 5, 1000 Ljubljana
 Phone: + 386 01 5805 200
 Fax: + 386 01 5805 213
 e-mail: fdv.idv(at)fdv.uni-lj.si
 see in particular (Internet):
Center for research on social psychology (contemporary ethnology of everyday life) [<http://csp.fdv.si/>; http://www.fdv.uni-lj.si/English/Research/Research_c.asp?id=11]
Social Communication Research Centre (media content studies) [http://www.fdv.uni-lj.si/English/Research/Research_c.asp?id=7]
Centre for Spatial Sociology (remains of large scale qualitative studies conducted by prof. Zdravko Mlinar, now retired) [http://www.fdv.uni-lj.si/English/Research/Research_c.asp?id=14]

Centre for methodology and informatics (meta analysis of qualitative studies) [<http://english.fdvinfo.net/index.php?fl=0&p1=300&p2=301&p3=&id=103>]

Appendix 3: Qualitative Longitudinal Resources in Slovenia

Important cultural historical studies held in ETNOINFOLAB

- Ivan (Juan) Benigar (1883-1950): a famous Slovene anthropologist who lived in South America among Indians Mapuche in Patagonia (Argentina) for more than 40 years and became one of the best known anthropologists in South America. The collections of his work consist of digital copies of hundreds of pages of all of his field notes, excerpts and different kinds of manuscripts that relate to his research work.
- Joel M. Halperen (1929): Halpern, a prominent American cultural anthropologist who has worked as a field researcher in Slovenia in the period of 1962/63, has gathered field data covering two Slovenian villages (Šenčur and Gradenc) that consists of field notes (more than 2000 pages of typescript) and more than 1000 photos and slides of everyday social life.
- Vekoslav Kremenšek (1930) and Vilko Novak (1910-2002), in doing extensive research projects with their students, have gathered a huge collections of data covering the following area and time period:
 - Collection ETSEO / Ethnological topography of Slovene ethnic territory. 1975-90
 - Collection Galjevica (Urban suburb of Ljubljana). 1970-75
 - Collection Vitanje. 1975-80
 - Collection Izseljenstvo (economic emigration from Slovenia)

Notes

1. Contact details of country reporters:

The country report on qualitative data resources for Slovenia was written by the following team of experts, each of them covering a particular area of the field under investigation.

Janez Štebe

Area: national policies, data archiving and sharing procedures, quantitative and qualitative research resources, development policies, IASSIST and CESSDA assistance

University of Ljubljana - Social Science Data Archives [<http://www.adp.fdv.uni-lj.si>]

Kardeljeva ploscad 5, 1000 Ljubljana

[janez.stebe@fdv.uni-lj.si]

Jože Hudales

Area: ethnographic qualitative data resources, qualitative data in museums, qualitative longitudinal data

University of Ljubljana – Faculty of arts, Department for ethnology and social anthropology [<http://etnologija.etnoinfo.org/en/default.asp>]

Askerceva 2, 1000 Ljubljana

[joze.hudales@ff.uni-lj.si]

Boris Kragelj

Area: state archives with national cultural heritage, private and public qualitative resources

University of Ljubljana – Faculty of social sciences

[http://www.fdv.uni-lj.si/English/Office_IC/]

Kardeljeva ploscad 5, 1000 Ljubljana

[boris.kragelj@fdv.uni-lj.si]

2. The report reflects the particular institutional background of the reporters: it mainly builds upon the circumstances of (predominantly quantitative) data archiving at Social Science Data Archives of Slovenia (ADP), that covers broad domain of social sciences in a country, supplemented with the perspective from a more humanities oriented domain, covered by Department of Ethnology and Social Anthropology of the Faculty of Arts at University of Ljubljana (FF). In addition, to survey overall existing qualitative data resources and collect the relevant information about the general situation concerning the data sharing and data archiving culture, a number of research groups and organisations with qualitative research profiles were briefed, either orally or in writing (a complete list of external collaborators involved in the preparation of the report is presented in the Appendix 1). Among all surveyed qualitative research centres, the following in particular proved to be valuable for the information presented in the final report: Faculty of Social Work (FSD) with its long and well established tradition of qualitative research on delinquency, youth, and mental health; The National Archives of the Republic of Slovenia (ARS), a preeminent institution for systematic preservation of historical national heritage concerning the Slovenian state, and The National Museum of Contemporary History (MNZ), a state museum, which provides a central public service in the area of the movable heritage of contemporary history, preserving studying and communicating the material and non-material heritage in the sphere of the history of the Slovene ethnic space from the beginning of the 20th century.

3. For further information see, <http://www.arrs.gov.si/en/>

4. See, <http://www.mvzt.gov.si/en/>,

5. For more information on the collections, policies, procedures and laws guiding and regulating the archiving and sharing of these materials see national Archives of the Republic of Slovenia – Ministry for Culture [<http://www.arhiv.gov.si/en/>].

6. Some descriptive metadata is usually presented in the final research report alone and not prepared as an independent report accompanying raw data (FSD, FDV).

7. See list in appendix 2.

8. For further information see, http://www.arhiv.gov.si/si/e_hramba_dokumentarnega_gradiva/.

9. See <http://arsq.gov.si/Query/suchinfo.aspx>

10. For further information see http://www.arhiv.gov.si/si/zakonodaja_standardi_in_dokumenti/.

11. The only obvious exception is Archive of the Catholic Church.

12. See, www.rtvlo.si

13. See <http://www.rtvlo.si/odprtikop/>

14. Weblinks for other projects of digitization of national cultural heritage supported by the Ministry of Culture, see <http://www.dlib.si/>; <http://www.kamra.si/>; <http://www.sistory.si/>; <http://www.dariah.eu/>

15. See <http://www.adp.fdv.uni-lj.si/>

16. See <http://www.ddialliance.org/>

17. Archives of the Catholic Church can be seen as the exception

18. See www.sistory.si

19. See <http://www.tovaris-tito.si/>, accessed on 1.3.2010.

20. For an example of an event history data study, see LOL94 - <http://www.adp.fdv.uni-lj.si/opisi/lo94/>

21. For example, pre- and post-election re-interviews: SJM90 - <http://www.adp.fdv.uni-lj.si/opisi/sjm90/>

22. For example, Slovene Labour Force Survey – <http://www.adp.fdv.uni-lj.si/opisi/serija/ADS/>.

23. For further details see under the heading “Etnološke raziskave slovenskih in drugih kultur” at <http://www.etnoinfo.org/>

24. For details see the following internet addresses: [<http://www.etnoinfo.org/>]; <http://etnologija.etnoinfo.org/sl/informacija>.

- asp?id_meta_type=75&id_informacija=199]. The parts of data collections which are still undergoing research or publication are only available through a special information system (<http://193.2.104.52/studsistem/>) for students, members of Department and researchers who must get special permission to log in to the system.
25. For further details contact: Prof. Anton Kramberger; FDV: anton.kramberger@fdv.uni-lj.si
 26. See e.g. MANAGE AND SHARE DATA section of ESDS – Economic & Social Research Council. <http://www.data-archive.ac.uk/>
 27. Overcoming a problem of diversity of qualitative research methods resulting in variety of different data forms and their particular formats shows itself as one of the biggest problems for realisation of more systematic preservation of qualitative data.
 28. See, http://www.adp.fdv.uni-lj.si/za_uporabnike/izrocenje_podatkov/

Qualitative and Quantitative Longitudinal Research and Resources in Belarus

by Prof. Larissa Titarenko and Asst. Prof. Olga Tereschenko¹



Abstract

The authors briefly describe the current situation in the field of quantitative research in Belarus and analyse the existing qualitative resources in this country.

The major finding of the paper is that sociologists in Belarus have not yet adopted a professional culture of sharing research information. Therefore, the resources of most surveys are not available for observation and use for anyone else

except for the "owner" of this information. The authors conclude that a specially elaborated strategy for involving

Belarus in European-wide research activities and the inclusion of Belarusian scholars in all-European professional associations is needed: it may help to bring the professional culture of sharing data into professional practice in Belarus, and make qualitative research more transparent to all scholars and the public in Belarus.

Keywords: Data resources, data archiving, qualitative data, longitudinal and repeat research, Belarus

Introduction

The Republic of Belarus is a typical post-soviet state that inherited a tendency for soviet sociology to be non-transparent and with poor public funding for quantitative research. Being an independent state for almost 20 years (since 1991) Belarus has still not joined any professional sociological structures in Europe in order to help its own social scholars to adopt and follow European research standards. In the case of quantitative research it means that Belarusian sociologists are not members of any groups or organisations that can help to inculcate such norms of professional work.

Currently there is no common practice of archiving data

In Belarus there are no social research data archives available for external users. Each research organisation archives its own data and materials for internal re-use only. Usually the head of this organisation has the right to decide who can use the data, and for which purposes.

Research culture is therefore rather closed. Data sharing is not prevalent as there are no traditions or official (or professional) policies to propagate research information – whether this relates to the research topics, data

received or potential users of the data. Regardless of the fact that the generation of such data is publically funded (i.e., should serve the needs of a whole society) such data are viewed as the intellectual property of particular organisations or even individuals. Therefore, as a rule, nobody, except the putative owner of the data can check this information and use it for any purposes.

Secondary analysis of the data collected by someone else is very rare: it can take place only in the case of personal negotiations between the owner of received data (research organisation or a researcher) and the potential user (also research organisation, researcher or other person). However, such negotiations take place only in relation to quantitative data. As for qualitative data, they are considered exclusively “personal” and not available for any “external” re-use. Additionally, qualitative data are often kept in a format that makes their re-use impossible by anybody else except for the person who collected them. For this reason, university staff do not even ask each other to share data within their own department in order to use such data for teaching sociology. Therefore, students often know qualitative methods more “in theory” than in practice.

Currently, there is no common practice of archiving data in Belarus. The raw data sets were sometimes destroyed after the completion of the research report because the research organisation simply did not have space to keep them. This reason dwindled during last years. Another reason for such action can be “professional security”. Some heads of sociological firms or other organisations are afraid of any “loss of data” and their external use without his or her permission, especially data related to the political sphere or research that was “ordered” by the state. Under the current conditions, the loss of such data or their re-use by someone else can be punished.

Last but not least, a lot of quantitative data were lost in the early 1990s, when Belarusian sociologists started to use personal computers and didn't know how to shift the “old” data to the new electronic platforms or didn't have resources for this because of the deepest economic crisis.

National policies on research data archiving and sharing

The national policies on research data archiving and sharing apply mainly to the National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Belarus (2011). The National Statistical Committee collects the current statistics (according to the approved list of the indicators and spheres to research), conducts some special demographic, social and economic surveys, and publishes the main results in statistical books. Interested organisations or private persons may buy some unpublished results, but they never have access to the raw data and full statistics. The National Statistical Committee has its own archive of population and sample surveys. However, it does not conduct qualitative research.

The Belarusian Government provides some financial support to a number of research organisations such as:

- The Science and Research Economic Institute that belongs to the Ministry of Economics²
- The Science and Research Institute for Labour and Social Defense that belongs to the Ministry of Labour and Social Defense³
- Minsk Science and Research Institute of Social-Economic Problems of the Minsk-city Government⁴
- The Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences.⁵

All these institutions conduct research for the state (a particular Ministry or Department or the Academy of Sciences) and/or their private customers (in the case of commercial research). They archive the collected data and raw research materials, and – again – do not share their data with any researchers from outside (regardless of the affiliation with the state institution or private firm). Similar practices are followed by all other research organisations, regardless of their ownership (i.e. state-owned or private-owned). Currently, there is no rule or habit to keep, archive and share the data that is gathered with state funding. Therefore, no organisation does it under its own initiative.

Qualitative data sources

There is no infrastructure for archiving and sharing qualitative data in Belarus on either the national or regional levels. Therefore, in this report we would like to review the main qualitative sources that may be potentially available.

- The majority of qualitative research projects are carried out by the marketing agencies, whose customers are usually private companies (quite often international and transnational trade companies).
- The main fields of research are the following: marketing, consumer behavior, and media functioning/ effectiveness.
- The main methods of research are focus groups and in-depth interviews.
- The methods used in organisational and corporate research are non-structured and/or participant observation.
- In the field of political research the prevailing method is in-depth (deep) interview.

All the data gathered for this marketing and political research is considered to be the property of the customers. Besides, most of the marketing agencies are included in the international marketing networks and can't make their own decisions concerning data sharing. They follow some corporate ethics within their network.

However, in some cases the state institutions, international organisations/ foundations (UNICEF, UNDP, UNESCO, etc.), and non-government organisations (especially those with international links) can commission qualitative research and pay for the information. We consider this kind of research as the most appropriate for data sharing and archiving, because these international organisations are familiar with the legal rules on archiving and sharing in Europe and world-wide. Therefore, they can provide the data—probably—after some negotiations or after the official agreement with some Belarusian organisations or the government.

The main potentially available qualitative sources are:

Institute of Sociology, the National Academy of Sciences (n.d). The state-funded Institute of Sociology conducts quarterly the so-called Quantitative repeat cross-sectional study. Usually they use a mixed methodology: population survey and in-depth interview. Their research includes the following topics (among others): (1) “Social and Political Situation in the Republic of Belarus” (annually).

The commissioner is the national government. Methodology: cross-sectional sample survey. However, some additional information for this study is collected with qualitative methods.

(2) "Means of Private Ownership, Wealth, and Prosperity" (2007)
Method used: case study in a rural settlement.

Sociological and Political Research Center at the Belarusian State University (n.d). According to their own estimations, qualitative research comprises up to 20% of all research done by this Centre. Marketing research prevails. However, when the national elections take place, the Centre is always commissioned by the political parties to organise qualitative research. They have their archive of qualitative data (papers, typed records, and films), although currently they are not ready to share their data.

Laboratory for Axiological Research NOVAK (n.d). The Laboratory regularly conducts qualitative studies for commercial organisations, state bodies and international organisations and foundations. The most used methods are focus groups and in-depth interviews. The main fields are marketing, media, and social studies. The topics of their social research in 2008–2009 were the following:

- "Social Contract" (method: focus groups, customer - the Institute of Belarusian Studies, Vilnius)
- "AIDS" (method: in-depth interviews; customer: the Ministry of Health of Belarus and the World Health Organisation)
- "Integration Processes between Russia and Belarus" (method: focus groups, customer - Eurasia Foundation)
- "Children with Special Needs" (methods: focus groups and in-depth interviews, customer - UNESCO)

Faculty of philosophy and social sciences, Belarusian State University (n.d)
The Departments of Sociology, Social Psychology, and Information and Communication affiliated with this Faculty, regularly conduct some small-scale qualitative research for their own needs – primarily for teaching. Methods used: in-depth interviews, observations, case study, and focus groups. However, their staff is often involved in some out-of-university consultancy.

The research information is usually available for the department's staff (only those involved in the collection of data) and for students for writing research papers, diplomas, dissertations, etc.

Additionally, there are some PhD studies conducted in Belarus on the basis of qualitative research and data collected by the authors:

- Oksana Shelest (Institute of Sociology, National Academy of Sciences) "Arising of new kinds of religiosity" (2005–2006), method - in-depth interviews.
- Ludmila Yakusheva (BSU, Department of Sociology) "Women Trafficking in Belarus" (2005-2006), methods: life histories and in-depth interviews concerning trafficking problems.
- Julia Lahvich (BSU, Department of Psychology) "Social and Psychological Factors of Successful Adoption" (2008-2009), mixed methodology: sample survey, sentences completion method, narrative interviews, in-depth interviews.

Longitudinal data sources

There is no infrastructure for the management and re-use of longitudinal data in Belarus.

Nevertheless quantitative panel research studies are rather widespread, especially in economics and marketing. For instance:

- The Households Panel of the National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Belarus.
- The Media Audience Panel and the Customers Panel of the Laboratory for Axiological Research NOVAK.
- The Stores Panel of the A.C. Nielsen Belarusian branch, etc.

In 1983–1998 the four-waves sociological longitudinal project "Paths of Generation" related to the high school graduates of 1983 has been conducted by the Institute of Sociology (1st and 2nd waves) and the Faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences, BSU (3rd and 4th waves), under supervision of Elena Borkowskaya. Overall, it was a part of a bigger Soviet (after 1991 – a cross-cultural, international) research study in which three Baltic republics were involved, together with Belarus.

The panel Belarusian-American Thyroid Cancer Project has been conducted regularly since 1999. It was devoted to the population of Belarus exposed to ionizing radiation due to the Chernobyl accident (1986).

Repeated qualitative and mixed methods research

The only repeated qualitative study we know is "Gender aspects of violence in refugees' midst" conducted by the Belarusian Young Christian Women Association in 2004 and 2009. The method of this research was focus groups. The commissioner: the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The same organisation ran a research project on "Home Violence against Women" in 2010 using qualitative methods (50 in-depth interviews). This study was funded by international sponsors with the intent to repeat it in a few years time.

As for mixed methods research, they are also not common and depend on the public needs and financial opportunities. Thus, in 2001, the first wave of the international project (12 countries involved) organized by the Minsk city narcological dispensary and funded by the World Health Organisation, was arranged in Minsk. The topic was called "Express-Estimation Intravenous Drugs Consumption in Minsk": it included of 2 surveys of drug users, 7 focus groups with drug users, 3 structured observations, and a series of in-depth interviews with experts in this sphere (medical doctors, policemen, NGO members and other specialists). The second wave (in 2003) included only two qualitative surveys (400 drug-users). The third wave of research is expected in the coming years, also with mixed methodology. Additionally, there is publicly available information about some repeat research studies run by the Institute of Sociology:

- "Civil society in perception of Belarusians", repeat study of the same object and design: the first wave was in 2005; the second wave was carried out in 2009. Mixed methodology: survey and in-depth interviews with selected respondents.
- "Belarusian National Identity", Repeat study of the same object: the first wave was in 2004; the second wave was in 2008, sentences completion method.

Development planning

Priorities for the next three years are:

- Creation of the first open data archive at the Belarusian State University (Faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences).
- Drawing up some rules and/or procedures to enable archived data and materials to be shared.

- Promotion of the idea of data sharing in the professional communities of researchers and data owners.

The main barriers seem to be the following: lack of experience, keeping the old (Soviet) tradition, conservative culture that forbids data sharing, archiving and re-using; and deficiencies in information about data sources and owners.

The existing foreign archiving organisations could be of some assistance in sharing experience in data archiving, procedures of data sharing, and ways of persuading research organisations and owners to give data for archiving and sharing. They could also help in establishing contacts with such international organisations as UNICEF, UNDP, UNESCO, which would enable work in Belarus to develop in tandem with best practice elsewhere and so that archivists can learn from the experience of others.

Conclusion

In common with all other European countries, Belarus badly needs research information of high quality about the social, political, and cultural processes that take place in the country. For these purposes the scientific community has to provide the state branches and the research organisations with objective social information. However, the Republic of Belarus is not rich enough to provide its researchers with the modern instruments that are necessary for collecting, archiving and sharing qualitative information in the social sciences. Additionally, since the country was politically isolated for almost fifteen years, the community of sociologists did not have a real possibility to join the international professional organisations or to develop their work with the support of such organisations. Therefore, there was no professional demand to adopt the existing professional rules and professional culture of sharing research information.

The existing situation in the social sciences is characterized by the lack of national public and/or scientific data archives (both quantitative and qualitative), the low level of awareness of the need for sharing the research data, their professional control (checking their quality), and the potential for data re-use. There are some researchers and even centers that try to follow the international standards in data collecting; however, they do not share their data.

Overall, Belarus badly needs to start the creation of data archives and join the European community of qualitative archives of social data. However, currently, the country does not have enough experience, resources and professional information to start the process. The help of the international community of social scholars and international organisations is badly needed.

In March 2009 Dr. Kevin Schürer, Director of the UK Data Archive, paid a short visit to Minsk as part of CESSDA project activities. He met the leading persons at the State Committee on Science and Technology – the so called “Ministry of Science” and had a talk with the staff. Then he visited the Faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences, BSU where he discussed the possibility of starting the archive (both qualitative and quantitative) at this university. Dr. Schürer promised to provide some necessary information and organisation support to BSU in organizing the data archive. However, there was no more information from his side as it was necessary to await funding decisions for CESSDA. Currently the Faculty expects that some information on how to start the data archive will be provided from GESIS and CESSDA.

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Notes

1. Prof. Larissa Titarenko, larisa166@mail.ru
Faculty of philosophy and social sciences, Belarusian State University
<http://www.ffsn.bsu.by>

Ass. Prof. Olga Tereschenko, oteresch@tut.by
Faculty of philosophy and social sciences, Belarusian State University
<http://www.ffsn.bsu.by>

2 For further information see: http://w3.economy.gov.by/Work_web/niel.nsf/

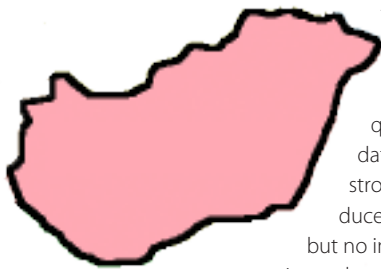
3. See: <http://www.instlab.org/>

4. See: http://www.minsk.gov.by/cgi-bin/org_ps.pl?mode=ind&k_org=3636

5. See: <http://sociologyby.org/structure.html>

Qualitative Longitudinal Research and Qualitative Resources

The Hungarian Case by Judit Gárdos and Gabriella Ivacs¹



Abstract

In Hungary, like in many of the former socialist countries, regardless of ongoing research projects based on qualitative data, archives of such research data are sporadic and fragmented. The strong tradition of sociological research produced a vast amount of qualitative social data but no infrastructure was developed to capture, organize and make available these data sets for further analysis. In most cases the secondary analysis or the long-term preservation of these valuable collections is hindered by institutional and disciplinary boundaries as well as a culture of unwillingness to share data in the humanities and social sciences. In Hungary future progress can only be expected if legal barriers are removed or addressed at the policy level; if the underlying infrastructure offers an attractive set of tools for future data collectors; if potential researcher's become aware of the improved access to data; and finally, if preservation best practices, standards, and benchmarking are spread among custodians of the content. It remains an open question which approach is more appropriate: creating a central data repository or setting up a decentralized network of institutions and individuals which can lead to inter-operable platforms to share content and know-how.

Keywords: fragmented archives, legal barriers, data preservation, lack of benchmarking, Hungary

Background

In the past 50 years in Hungary, tens of thousands of interviews have been conducted across widely divergent topics of sociology. This giant scientific source is scattered, idle and is gradually perishing. Even though publications

and articles referring to the original data sets do not cease to come out, the raw data is unlikely to be found with ease. To our knowledge, surveys, interviews, and transcriptions collected by researchers were often merged into personal collections of known scholars. Sometimes these files were simply discarded due to lack of space, preservation problems, or, in more fortunate situations, they were donated to libraries, archives or museums but without being described and made available for research. Inadequacy of cataloguing and preservation by all three types of institutions is due to their lack of expertise to describe these materials in depth, e.g., archival descriptions do not go beyond the functional grouping of files. For example, before the Transition period the research projects related to Roma minority issues in Hungary were conducted under various umbrella projects for fear of exposing serious social issues. In the Communist era terms such as Roma problems, unemployment, and social integration were not part of the official research discourse, which was controlled and censored by the Party. Moreover, legitimate research results had to be hidden in the drawers of dusty filing cabinets, and published reports had to avoid sensitive issues as well.

In the past two years, the pilot project called "Voices of the 20th Century - Archive and Research Center" (For further information on VOICES see, www.voicesofthe20century.hu), financed by the Hungarian State Research Fund, has been creating in an inventory of existing resources of qualitative social scientific data, especially interview material gathered in Communist and Post-Communist periods. This comprehensive inventory (now freshly available on the website) is the first step towards setting up an open and public online archive. Our aim is to make the textual and audio-visual heritage of the history of the 20th century accessible to broader audience, both scholars and the

public. Broad public access would enable informed citizens to learn about the 20th century and experience it in a sympathetic way. On the other hand, advanced users of the material – researchers, teachers, media workers and students – could analyse the context in which data was collected, how the results were built into scientific knowledge, and how they could be re-assessed to generate new scientific knowledge. Initially, qualitative audio and audiovisual social scientific collections are being uploaded to the webpage.

It is also to be noted that segregated resources based on disciplinary silos can offer less value to researchers who are interested in broader subjects, periods, and phenomena, rather than a particular social data set from a given period. It is highly recommended to evaluate the possibility of integrating qualitative data archives in Hungary into the existing archival infrastructure, if an adequate one already exists. Archival management, preservation methods, and technology issues can be easily adapted to the special content; in exchange, integrated resources are more attractive to researchers.

For archives and information professionals it is always a challenge to work with legacy data; contextual information attached to collections gathered for various purposes in various ways is as valuable as the records themselves. Preserving provenance information will remain a real problem in the case of scattered qualitative data sets in Hungary as well. The chain of custody in many situations is not clear: nobody knows how certain sets of files migrate to particular members of research teams, who holds the most comprehensive collection, how many copies exist with whom, and so on.

At the same time ownership and intellectual property rights issues also ought to be addressed: research projects financed by state funds are often considered private initiatives, and regulations imposed by the funding organs to share collected data with 'secondary' users are rarely enforced. Secrecy, restrictiveness, fragmentation, isolation, and lack of awareness of cooperation, sharing and preservation continues to characterise the Hungarian research culture, and we can state that in the last 50 years no real progress has been made in this respect. Meanwhile quantitative social sciences and quantitative data archiving are in a somewhat more favourable situation. There is no doubt that the internationally known institution, TÁRKI Social Research Institute (the only Hungarian member of CESSDA) has had a crucial role in introducing the practice of re-using quantitative data from empirical social research, but the use of their archive is not widespread either.

The Hungarian Data Protection Law seems to be another obstacle to interdisciplinary data sharing: the current version of the legislation does not provide straightforward guidelines on how to make digitized resources containing private data available online, how to define private data in the technology enhanced environment, or how to anonymize digital content in a less difficult way. The Law is deeply rooted in the outdated structure of traditional paper archives. A model of distributed archiving, sharing a common infrastructure and with the participation of several players from organisations to individuals is not approved by the Legislation.

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The VOICES project

The project is overseen by the Institute of Sociology of the Hungarian Academy of Science, in cooperation with the Open Society Archives at

Central European University and the Hungarian National Audiovisual Archive. The VOICES team has developed a two year project plan ending in spring 2011 to examine through a pilot how different types of interview material can be re-used for further research, with their various formats enhanced by technology solutions such as digitization, OCR, voice recognition techniques and so on. Having completed the pilot, a sample collection containing mixed media are being published online along with the contextual information about the methodology employed during the data collection process. Prospective students, researchers of science studies, cultural studies or social studies will be involved in the early project stages to explore the content and incorporate the data into their early works: theses, publications, and other projects. Other expected outcomes of the pilot project are a mechanism to regulate online access according to privacy levels, added features like tagging, annotating, searching and browsing on the web site, and published resources on the methodology of research.

The future archive has three pillars: preservation, research and access. As a result, the VOICES team has direct and continuous contact with new qualitative research projects and collections as well as undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate university programs. The planned website gives an opportunity to co-operate with similar domestic and international initiatives, e.g., other sub-archives, user networks, links, and partner institutions (VOICES is now part of the EQUALAN network of European Qualitative Archives). Our research team, being well-integrated in international research and archival networks, will be able to inform the wider international scientific public about the work of the Voices of the 20th Century Archive.

A plan about data protection and confidentiality for our new archive has been completed (in Hungarian), in accordance with the Hungarian Ombudsman for the Protection of Personal Data. Such a plan proved to be crucial in gaining state funds, since there has been considerable concern about data protection in the reviewers' reports. Data protection is a sensitive issue in many post-socialist countries, Hungary among them. In particular, the role of key personalities in the former socialist secret service has been a huge topic in the Hungarian public sphere. Some historians—using state archive material—reveal from time to time the real names of secret service agents, some of them prominent individuals in contemporary politics or arts. This is made possible by a law text (§32 of the data protection law) stating that if it is necessary for the description of the scientific results concerning events of a historical period, personal data can be published without the consent of the person. In some cases, there has been considerable public discussion whether the identification of a specific person was really needed, and there have been lawsuits against historians for publishing personal data.

Lately, there have been lively discussions among quantitative social scientists about to re-use and merge statistical databases generated in the administrative branch (government organizations, municipalities, censuses, etc.). The question of anonymity is crucial here, since two anonymous databases, if combined, can possibly lead to a new one in which identities can be traced. There is the desire for countrywide guidelines concerning the merging of mainly state-owned databases, and short proposals for a new law have been issued in May 2010 by the Fényes Elek Research Center for Statistics and Econometrics of the Hungarian Sociological Association.

VOICES in the context of archiving in Hungary

This is the context in which the VOICES Archive has to be established. We have been able to investigate the attitudes of some other archiving

institutions and we are becoming aware of the fears of individual researchers in Hungary, which are yet to be fully understood; we have just begun our work with them. The institutions are very protective about their material. There seem to be several reasons for this attitude. For the big state archives such as the State Radio, easy (online) access even to the catalogue is not an important principle. They seem to be content with their huge holdings and are not very eager to cooperate substantially either with other institutions or with individual users. The Audiovisual Archives of the National Széchényi Library cite reasons to explain their data protection policies: there is no existing public catalogue of the interviewees—although such a restriction is not required by the current laws. The researcher can find out whether a certain person has been interviewed, but he cannot ask for a complete list of all interviewed persons. We have only some numbers available: The Collection of Historical Interviews in this Archive has collected and produced approximately 1500 interviews with the principal figures of Hungarian history, public life and culture since 1985.

In the case of research institutions, we encountered a somewhat similar attitude, maybe typical of countries with weak qualitative archiving and sharing traditions. Research institutions seem to guard their findings and are not particularly supportive of “alien” researchers. There are some peculiar means used to restrict information about their material: in the case of a research institute with extensive oral history interview materials, the catalogue describing which interviews are also available in audio format is not made public. But if a researcher asks for a particular interview, he or she will be able to get this information. There seems no rational reason for such conduct. These different attitudes of researchers and institutions would make an interesting research topic and would reveal much about the post-socialist research culture.

Archival holdings in Hungary

Most archives collecting scientific interview material focus on topics related to the humanities, especially World War II and the socialist era. The first topic is represented in Hungary by Centropa, an interactive database of Jewish memory. The project combines old family pictures (a database of 25,000 digitized images) with their accompanying stories (abridged and summarized interviews presented as texts on the homepage and parts read by an actor). Centropa has interviewed more than 1,350 elderly Jews living in Central and Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, and the Sephardic communities of Greece, Turkey and the Balkans. It has a separate Hungarian sample and institution. The second topic is covered by the Oral History Archive (OHA) of the Institute for the History of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, a collection of oral history interviews focusing on the Revolution and the era of János Kádár. The Open Society Archive (OSA) also holds data on the socialist era and archives research resources for the study of Communism and the Cold War, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as issues of human rights. The OSA has launched a Digital Archive, with the aim of broadening access to primary sources by overcoming technical, legal, geographic, and socio-cultural barriers. They developed a strategy which includes large-scale digitization, multilingual description, and the implementation of open-source solutions and open standards. They also seek to meet current international benchmarks by becoming a trusted digital repository.

To our knowledge, there are no qualitative longitudinal data collections in Hungary. All the above mentioned collections contain material addressing life courses and oral histories. There are some follow-up studies, but only on the level of the individual researchers. One of the aims of our new Archive VOICES will be to investigate who has done qualitative longitudinal projects, as they are not sufficiently documented even at the level of scientific publications.

The only Hungarian institution that is a member of CESSDA is TÁRKI. The TÁRKI Data Archive is the national data repository for empirical research data in Hungary. It collects, stores and publishes a great number of surveys for the social science and business communities nationally and internationally, focusing on quantitative data. The aim of VOICES is to create an internationally acclaimed research database for qualitative social scientific resources in Hungary as well, since –unfortunately– there are currently many gaps in qualitative archiving in Hungary.

The main priorities of VOICES for the next three years are to map existing qualitative resources and to develop a data workflow of creation, capture, deposit, archiving and long-term curation based on international standards. We are engaged in exploring cost-effective technological solutions for managing digital data, in building a network of partners (such as potential data donors, experts and users) and in shaping the Hungarian research culture of not sharing data.

There are some major problems to be solved during our work, such as gaps in Hungarian legislation and outdated legislation, IPR issues, the handling of personal data, the lack of a community approach in the sharing of scientific data, and of course the shortage of long-term funding and the need for sustainability.

Existing organisations (IASSIST, CESSDA) might be of assistance in many ways, among them with their know-how on inventorying, collecting data, and depositing content, their expertise in data archiving systems, technology solutions and in the methodology for developing the policy framework for managing and redistributing data sets.

To secure their future, qualitative archives all over Europe depend on constant and reliable financial help. Being embedded in a community of archives brings new opportunities for mutual assistance in issues of both science and funding.

Further reading

For a bibliography about oral history literature in Hungarian language see: www.replika.hu/system/files/archivum/58-07.pdf

One of the rare analyses of Hungarian oral history: Lénárt, A. (2007). *Történetgyűjtés. Az Oral history tudományos műhelyei Magyarországon 1945 után.* [Collection of History. Oral History Labs in Hungary after 1945] *Aetas* 2. pp5–30.

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Note

1. Judit Gárdos Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Sociology, “Voices of the 20th Century - Archive and Research Center”, The work of Judit Gardos has been partly enabled by fund no. 77566 of the Hungarian Scientific Research Fund (OTKA). gardos.judit@socio.mta.hu

Gabriella Ivacs Open Society Archives, Central European University, ivacsg@ceu.hu

Exploring Qualitative Longitudinal Research and Qualitative Resources

THE LITHUANIAN CASE by Jurate Butviliene and Tomas Butvilas¹



Abstract

Within this paper the situation of qualitative longitudinal (QL) research and archiving systems in Lithuania is presented along with an overview of existing research cultural issues and trends. It is highly important to stress that qualitative longitudinal research in this country is experiencing a new prominence as for many years the quantitative tradition was predominant in the scientific community. Finally a few statements will be made on possible constructive ways to develop further existing resources and infrastructure for qualitative archiving and for QL research and resources.

Keywords: Qualitative longitudinal research, archiving system, social science data archiving, qualitative resources management, Lithuania.

Introduction

Since the 1990s, there have been numerous high-level qualitative research studies made by Lithuanian scientists, especially in the social sciences of Sociology, Education and Political Sociology (e.g., value studies, regional and urban studies, migration issues, attitudes towards careers among school teachers, elite studies, attitudes towards EU integration etc.). However, according to Krupavicius and Gaidys (2009), the situation in Eastern European countries is almost completely different to that of Western Europe, since

social science data archives, as a necessary element of science infrastructure, are almost non-existent or are still in the early phases of development. In many cases in Eastern Europe empirical data for social sciences are still available through various widely dispersed institutions or through individual contacts². This difference is certainly not due to the dearth of empirical social science or empirical data sets, but rather because of a lack of legal and institutional arrangements and funding capacities to promote a regular process of social data archiving as well as access to this data by a broad community of social scientists within different countries and from abroad according to clear and transparent rules. Lithuania is not an exception in this. Moreover, Krupavicius and Gaidys (2009) go on to note that Lithuania is lagging behind such countries as Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Estonia and Romania, which already possess the basic structures of social science data archives. This slower development in the area of social science data archives in Eastern Europe, and for Lithuania in particular, needs to be considered in terms of a few major variables in order to achieve change and formulate adequate solutions or policy decisions.

There are few official documents signed by government representatives that support a social science data archiving and sharing policy. However, various European projects sustain this whole process and help to further develop its infrastructure. There

is the Lithuanian Humanities and Social Science Data Archive (LiDA) that was initiated in July 2006 as a two year national level project with objectives for "Storage and administration of empirical data and information for Lithuanian humanities and social science data." The project has been supported by the EU European Social Fund. The project has been implemented by Kaunas University of Technology Policy and Public Administration Institute in partnership with Vilnius University, Institute for Social Research, the Republic of Lithuania Ministry of Education and Science. The project was completed in September 2008³.

There are some official documents regarding national policies on data archiving and sharing, i.e. Resolution No. 1389 dated November 22, 1996 of the Government of Lithuania "Regarding the order of distribution of legal deposit copies of publications and other documents to libraries" (Žin, 2006, No. 136-5170)⁴. This document assures the following activities take place: i) performs control of free legal deposit copy delivery to the National Archive of published documents; ii) stores and preserves documents published in Lithuania and other documents with national content; and iii) stores and preserves web documents in the Archive of Electronic Resources. Less than a decade ago on-line resources were non-existent in Lithuanian libraries. Lithuanian participation in eFL.net⁵ opened access to affordable on-line resources for Lithuanian researchers, students, and the general public⁶. Expenditure for on-line resources is included in annual statistics and the evaluation of libraries (especially the academic ones) also takes these figures into consideration. As eFL.net grows to meet the evolving challenges of electronic resource acquisition and management, so the Lithuanian Research Library Consortium member libraries' expands its range of activities in partnership.

The aim of this paper is to present the situation regarding qualitative longitudinal research and archiving systems in Lithuania and also to discuss possible means to sustain and develop this quite new phenomenon in the national and local social science culture. Two main methods were chosen: i) scientific literature analysis, evaluation, and interpretation and ii) law acts and normative documents analysis, comparison, and their dissemination in written format.

Lithuanian qualitative archiving infrastructure and main empirical research institutions

As Glosiene (n.d)⁷ states, the landscape of continuing professional development (CPD) for Luxembourg Income Study (LIS)⁸ is rather heterogeneous in Lithuania. There are several important institutions in the network. The main state-supported institution for CPD of public librarians as well as for museum cultural center workers is the Cultural Ministry that offers training courses only for one segment of the LIS community – public libraries; academic, school and special libraries are not offered CPD courses. The second institution is the Martynas Mazvydas National Library of Lithuania⁹ (NLL). It is a responsibility of the NLL to provide both support and training to different libraries in different fields, public ones first of all but also to the school libraries to a certain extent. The Center for Librarianship which is a part of NLL offers lectures and seminars on the actual topics of libraries' activities and their modernization but they are organized as a part of methodological support activities and do not fit into the concept of CPD precisely. The Lithuanian Central State Archive¹⁰ has been a member of the International Federation of Television Archives (FIAT/IFTA) since 2004¹¹. The institution's audiovisual holdings consist of film, sound and video recordings as well as photo documents. The division of Image and Sound is the main repository of cinema heritage in Lithuania and holds a total of 7.612 titles: Lithuanian chronicles from 1920-1940,

chronicles of the Second World years, diverse Lithuanian newsreels and sketches from the post-war period, Lithuanian feature films, documentaries of independent film studios and individual creators, starting from 1991.

The Lithuanian music libraries network consists of over 150 different libraries possessing music stocks¹². Libraries belonging to research library system - the National Library, Vilnius University Library, Library of Lithuanian Academy of Science and Library of Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre - have the most important holdings of music documents. The National Library is the leading library in the country and the Music Department of the National Library provides professional assistance to the network of music libraries in order to introduce music specification into the field of library science and activity. The music document stocks are formed by integrating specialized and universal library functions and holdings contain all forms of music documents such as printed music, manuscripts, audio video materials, books, serials etc. The main sources of funding of those institutions are as follows: i) the Lithuanian Government (i.e. Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science and the State Fund of Science and Studies); ii) EU project funds; iii) private funds (rarely). A detailed map of main empirical research institutions in Lithuania is given in Appendix 1 of this paper.

Qualitative longitudinal (QL) data

As Chenail (1992) emphasizes, much of qualitative research is dominated by research traditions from education, sociology, and anthropology. The researchers from these fields favor such methods as ethnography, participant observation, and naturalistic inquiry. In addition to these popular methods, qualitative research can also include methods from fields such as communication (i.e. discourse analysis or conversation analysis), literature (i.e. narrative analysis or figurative language analysis). Valantiejus (2005) adds to this that contrary to the popular definition of qualitative research as the new mode of cognition, we can see qualitative method as having at its essence the concepts of hermeneutics, pragmatism, and radical micro-sociology. Thus it becomes more important to analyze QL data collecting and archiving issues and consequently to consider strengthening this position in Lithuanian social science data research.

Development planning or steps to consider

Although in recent years Lithuania has made obvious progress in the development of the information society, much still has to be improved in order to achieve an inclusive information society in which everyone can participate on equal terms¹³. Among the principal targets there are widespread installation of broadband access, the development of e-content and e-skills, as well as motivating inhabitants to take up new e-services and measures aimed at enabling them to do so. Another important area for attention to accelerate the participation of target groups at risk of exclusion. Thus existing organisations such as IASSIST and CESSDA could certainly strengthen Lithuanian present institutions and research centres that mainly concentrate on furthering their substantive and methodological programmes. Also support from international agencies and funders would be much of help for the Lithuanian Department of Statistics that collects and disseminates important national information via different channels.

According to Krupavicius and Gaidys' (2009), the international dimension of the development of the Lithuanian Social Science and Humanities Data Archive (LiDA), mentioned earlier, is especially important for: i) enabling free access to existing Lithuanian and international empirical data and ii) sharing expertise obtained through cooperative agreements with similar academic service organizations abroad. Such

international agreements help to attract more material and intellectual investments from all domestic institutions. Moreover, the capacity of LiDA to facilitate access by Lithuanian scholars to international empirical data holdings and research development know-how is seen as a way of building confidence and consensus among domestic Lithuanian institutions for the process of forming and expanding a national data archive. Thus participation of LiDA in collaborative international projects could help to create a resource base for linking qualitative and quantitative research data, even though there are still differing opinions as to the importance of these two research strategies in the social sciences (Bryman, 2008; Denzin, 2008 et al.). Finally, international cooperation is almost a precondition in order to obtain sufficient funding from national and international sources for the further development of LiDA as well as for qualitative data archiving.

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7. See at: <http://tltc.shu.edu/doclib/data/doc/glosiene.1176321015.pdf>
8. The Luxembourg Income Study (LIS) is a cross-national Data Archive and a Research Institute located in Luxembourg [taken from: <http://www.lisproject.org/>].
9. More at: <http://www.lnb.lt/lnb/selectLanguage.do?language=en>
10. More at: <http://www.filmarchives-online.eu/partners/lithuanian-central-state-archive>
11. Further information at: http://www.filmarchives-online.eu/partners/lithuanian-central-state-archive/view?set_language=en
12. See at: <http://www.iaml.info/activities/lithuania/2006/report>
13. See at: <https://countryprofiles.wikispaces.com/Lithuania>

Notes

1. Jurate Butviliene, PhD student of Sociology
Lithuanian Centre for Social Researches, Lithuania
e-mail: jurate.terepaite@gmail.com
- Tomas Butvilas, PhD
Associate Professor at Vilnius University, Education Department,
Lithuania
e-mail: tomas.butvilas@fsf.vu.lt
2. Similar positions were publicly shared during the Bremen workshop (2009) from other countries representatives, e.g., Poland, Finland, Switzerland, and Czech Republic etc.
3. More at: http://www.lidata.eu/en/page.php?page=apie_projekta
4. For further information see: http://www.lnb.lv/lv/bibliotekariem/konferencu-materiali/20070420/regina_varniene.pdf
5. eIFL.net is a not for profit organisation that supports and advocates for the wide availability of electronic resources by library users in transitional and developing countries. Its core activities are negotiating affordable subscriptions on a multi-country consortial basis, supporting national library consortia and maintaining a global knowledge sharing and capacity building network in related areas, such as open access publishing, intellectual property rights, open source software for libraries and the creation of institutional repositories of local content [taken from: <http://www.eifl.net/cps/sections/about>].
6. See at: <http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla74/papers/148-Banionyte-en.pdf>

Appendix 1

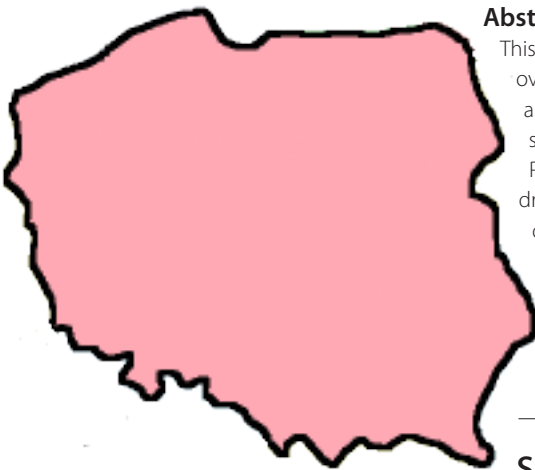
Main Empirical Research Institutions in Lithuania

	Institution	Data collections since/ remarks
Lithuanian Academy of Sciences	Institute of Philosophy, Sociology, Lithuanian Academy of Sciences	Late 1960s; sociological and demographic research data
	Institute of Economics, Lithuanian Academy of Sciences	Since the 1970s
	Institute of Social Studies	A successor institution to the Institute of Philosophy, Sociology, Lithuanian Academy of Sciences; since April 1, 2002
	Kaunas University of Technology	Since the 1970s; sociological and political research
Universities	University of Klaipėda	Since the 1990s; sociological empirical research
	University of Law (present Mykolas Romeris University)	Since the mid-1990s; sociological and political empirical research
	University of Šiauliai	Since the late 1990s; sociological empirical research and educational sciences
	University of Vilnius	Since the 1970s; sociological and political research
	Vytautas Magnus University	Since the 1990s; sociological empirical research
Statistical offices	Department of Statistics	
Other government and non-government institutions	Lithuanian Bank	
	Ministry of Finance	
	Ministry of Health Care	
	Central Electoral Committee	Since 1992
	Lithuanian Free Market Institute	Since 1990
International organizations	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), International Monetary Fund, Transparency International, Population Activities Unit of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, International Organization of Migration etc.	Various years
	Baltic Surveys	Since 1992
	Vilmorus	Since 1993
Private institutions of public opinion and market research	Social Information Center	Since 1993

Source: Krupavicius, A., Gaidys, V. (2009). *Empirical Social Research in Lithuania*. Interactive: <http://www.cee-socialscience.net/archive/empirical/lithuania/report1.html>

Data Sharing and Archiving Qualitative and QL Data in Poland

by Piotr Binder and Piotr Filipkowski¹



Abstract

This paper gives a brief overview on practices of archiving and re-using social scientific data in Poland. We start from drafting our diagnosis of the field, then move to some concrete examples of relevant initiatives. Most of them are of non academic character

Furthermore, whereas some social scientists are skeptical about sharing their own data, others, e.g. anthropologist, are reluctant even to use qualitative data not gathered by themselves (their motto: the researcher has to soak in the atmosphere of the field, "only he/she knows what is the *real* meaning of the collected materials, because he/she was there, usually for a long period, he/she experienced the situation and as a consequence only he/she can *properly* interpret the data"). Therefore, it is more likely that using someone else's qualitative data in a project (obviously with a permission of the author) might cause deep methodological concerns of more experienced colleagues rather than arouse academic interest or approval.

and are focused on oral history documentation and research project (which we count

among qualitative research); some examples of longitudinal studies are also mentioned. Finally we are trying to formulate key problems impeding development of the field – without losing conviction, they will be overcome.

Keywords: data sharing, archiving, qualitative data, Qualitative longitudinal research, oral history, Poland.

To what extent is data sharing or archiving for re-use part of the research culture in Poland?

Based on the example of probably all social sciences it might be said that data sharing is not a part of research culture at all. There has been no academic tradition of such kind in social sciences in Poland. Although the problem is being brought up at least occasionally no significant change has been noticed within the rather conservative sociological main stream.

some social scientists are skeptical about sharing their own data

As a result, on the level of everyday practice most of the data collected in the field has a "disposable" character. Once the publication is ready they find their place in the researcher's desk drawer. Exceptions are being made for close co-workers, assistants, selected PhD and MA students, mostly in the situations when they join particular research teams and/or continue the work of their predecessors (very often their supervisors).

Apart from what Paul Thompson called "sitting on data" there is also an important question of reliability of sources. For instance most of the contemporary Polish historians treat sources like recorded interviews as untrustworthy. The dominant approach in historiography has been deeply positivistic and, as such, too strict to develop research based on oral history interviewing. This group of researchers had to deal also with a problem of political character. Oral history has been often understood as some sort of

“history from below” or as “giving voice to the voiceless”, which before 1989 was ideologically uncomfortable and treated as suspicious in the official historiography in Poland.

What is interesting is that institutions and projects that are oriented towards archiving qualitative data do exist. This report provides many examples of such initiatives. Although some of them are relatively advanced, they do not compose a network, but constitute rather a group of dispersed and diversified projects facing similar problems and very often competing with each other especially in the area of funding. However what must be stressed – and this is crucial for this document – is that archiving institutions function practically outside academia. Contacts between both sides are loose and based on individual rather than inter-institutional cooperation.

The existence of one only – and until now not a very successful one – official archive of qualitative data affiliated at the academic institution in Poland proves that changing the existing patterns and introducing new ones is not an easy task to do. Nevertheless, the authors would like to believe that with efficient cooperation and exchange of information as well as with effective promotion of good practices some “qualitative change” will be possible even within very conservative Polish academic circles.

Existing qualitative archiving infrastructure:

After what has been stated in the introduction one can expect not to read much about existing infrastructure for archiving qualitative data of an academic character in Poland. To a vast extent those intuitions are true, because at the present time there is only one enterprise of such kind.

Qualitative Data Archive [Archiwum Danych Jakościowych ADJ]²

ADJ is an initiative of a group of researchers from the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences (IFIS PAN) to establish an archive of qualitative data. Unfortunately, after almost five years of experiences it is still at its very initial stage. Problems with financing as well as with the common practice of not sharing gathered data have limited development and expansion. The milieu of researchers involved in this initiative grows slowly, however, working pro-bono they keep collecting qualitative data. Apart from those coming from their personal research project (e.g. over 200 interviews with young people gathered within a project *Generation 1989*) they managed to save the entire collection of fieldwork materials from 1970s and 1980s (from tape-recorded interviews and fieldwork notes to photographs and family budgets) of the team of Professor Andrzej Siciński (which is discussed below).

In the last months there has been more intensive discussion at the Polish Academy of Science on the need to develop and expand qualitative archiving. We would like to start with data collections produced in different project realised within the Academy, but also start collecting ‘external’ data. The key obstacle is lack of additional funds for this initiative.

Existing qualitative archiving infrastructure of non-academic character

Oral History Archive of the KARTA Centre and History Meeting House³ in Warsaw

This was the first Polish initiative that started to record, collect and archive qualitative data in a systematic way on a wider scale. Until now

it is also the biggest and the most diversified collection of qualitative data in Poland.

Karta started in the early 1980s as a milieu of young dissidents who decided to oppose the official system through gathering, preserving and publicizing documentation (including: memoirs, diaries, interviews, pictures, documents etc.) regarding individuals and groups “forgotten” or rather neglected in the political mainstream. In the 1980s KARTA managed to establish the so called Eastern Archive, where approximately 1200 interviews with Poles repressed by the Soviet State were stored. Additionally, KARTA’s activists were conducting interviews with Polish dissidents, people who, in various ways, actively opposed the communist system before 1989.

These two experiences were of a decisive character. In 2002 a decision was made to invite KARTA to participate in the Mauthausen Survivors Documentation Project. It was the biggest European oral history project devoted to a single Nazi concentration camp. Over 860 interviews were conducted all over the Europe in the United States and Israel. KARTA recorded and elaborated over 160 biographical narrative interviews with Polish Mauthausen survivors. The strong position of KARTA was highlighted by the fact that, unlike in other participating countries, the Polish part of the project was coordinated by a non-academic institution.

The experience of the Mauthausen Project forced KARTA to establish a permanent Oral History Programme and create a modern oral history archive. The process that started at that time has had a long and difficult history. However thanks to generous support of institutions like the European Commission, the Polish Senate (the upper chamber of the parliament), German Foundation “Remembrance, Responsibility and Future” and the Polish Committee of Scientific Research, within the past few years KARTA has completed several significant oral history projects. Nevertheless it needs to be stressed that the financial side of creating an entirely new archiving infrastructure without stable institutional or state support is particularly challenging.

The archive could not function and develop so intensively without the support of the History Meeting House (HMH), a municipal institution of culture established in 2006 on Karta’s initiative. The archive itself belongs to both institutions (physically it is located at the History Meeting House). Thanks to this co-operation the oral history collection could be digitalised (including the interviews collected in 1980s), catalogued and partly published on the website: www.audiohistoria.pl (full access available on the premises of HMH). Each interview is accompanied with a questionnaire, biographical data of the interviewee and short description of the narrative together with interviewer’s remarks regarding the interview situation. Unfortunately, due to the lack of sufficient sources only selected stories could be transcribed.

Museum of Warsaw Uprising⁴

Shortly after its opening in 2004 a separate oral history unit was established to conduct, collect and make accessible interviews with Polish soldiers of the Warsaw Uprising. Up to now approximately 2000 video interviews have been recorded. Edited transcripts are available online, with full recordings at the premises of the museum. In 2008 the museum published a catalogue of its oral history collection. The Museum of Warsaw Uprising is a state funded institution with a stable budget. Its oral history archive is additionally supported on a regular basis by one of the biggest Polish banks.

Brama Grodzka – Teatr NN In Lublin⁵

The institution itself has existed since 1990, and its oral history programme since 1998. Brama Grodzka is active in the Lublin area (in the South-East of Poland) the region that until WWII was particularly multi-ethnic and multicultural. Although its pre-war past constitutes the main focus of interest, the institution is also running other related projects e.g. to WWII or democratic opposition in Poland.

Brama Grodzka has collected and archived approximately 800 audio (and some video) interviews. Partial access to this collection is possible over the internet, full at the premises of the institution. Brama Grodzka cooperates with Public Radio Lublin, which created the Oral History Studio. As a municipal cultural institution it is maintained by the city of Lublin.

These are the biggest and most advanced (also in archiving and reusing) Oral History initiatives in Poland. Since several years, there are many smaller projects operating at the moment. Some of them are listed at the end (see Appendix II). These various activities in the field of oral history are not only dispersed but there is also very little discussion and cooperation between them. However the need to integrate the milieu has already been perceived. In autumn 2007 the first international conference on oral history in Poland was organized in Kraków (Oral History: The Art of Dialogue). This event was followed by the setting up of the Polish Oral History Association in January 2009. The platform for discussions, exchange has appeared. One of the goals is to create a database covering all Polish oral history initiatives and introduce common standards of description and archiving of collected material.

Qualitative longitudinal (QLL) data

(i.e., data of diverse formats (interviews, videos etc.) addressing time and temporality gathered in follow-up and repeat cross sectional studies, and retrospective studies such as life and oral histories)

Due to the fact that there is no access to data collections of most of academic research projects we have decided to provide some examples – although not many – of: longitudinal studies or projects involving follow-up studies, repeated studies or retrospective studies. Additionally, where possible, contact details of the heads of the projects or people who possess collected data sets are provided.

1) Repeated monographs of local communities:

Monographs of local communities along with the analyses of personal documents and competitions of memoirs once gained the title of being the “calling card” of Polish empirical sociology (to mention only “The Polish Peasant in Europe and America” edited by F. Znaniecki and W.I. Thomas, 1918-1920).

Chronologically the first monographs in Poland were written by ethnographers. The greatest achievement of the 19th century was *The People*, an 86-volume work by Oskar Kolberg. The beginning of the 20th century was a time of ‘economic’ monographs e.g. by Franciszek Bujak (1901, 1903). Those monographs that are regarded in Polish sociology as “sociological” appeared only after that and were usually focused on a particular problem – so called problem monographs e.g. *The Polish-German Antagonism in the Factory Settlement “Kopalnia” in Upper Silesia* by Józef Chałasiński (1935).

Although neglected in the 1970s, they have been recently gaining interest, together with the growing popularity of the ideas of localism and local problems in social sciences in Poland after 1989.

Examples:

- Bujak, Franciszek. 1901. *Maszkiernice - Village of Brzeg County. Economic and Social Relations.*
- Bujak, Franciszek. 1911. *Maszkiernice - Village of Brzeg County. From 1901 to 1911.*
- Zawistowicz-Adamska, Kazimiera. 1948. *Rural Community: Experiences and Deliberations.* (based on fieldwork conducted in Zaborów village in 1938)
- Wieruszewska, Maria. 1978. *Transformation of local Community. Zaborów after 35 Years.*
- Bujak, Zbigniew. 1903. *Żmiąca -Village of the Limanowa County. Economic and Social Relations.*
- Wierzbicki, Zbigniew. 1963. *Żmiąca Half a Century Later.*
- Łuczewski, Michał. 2007. *National Experience in Everyday Life. Problem monograph of Żmiąca Village: 1370-2007⁶.*

2) Research on life styles⁷

In the 1970's and 1980's the team of Professor Andrzej Siciński from the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Science was running a project on life styles of individuals and families in Polish cities. Throughout this time each team member was cooperating with several families. A wide variety of qualitative methods were applied: from participant observation, in-depth interviews and documents to photographs and home budgets. The main outcome of the project was six volumes edited by Siciński between 1976 and 1988.

3) Research on poverty⁸

Since the mid-1990's three sociologists, namely Elżbieta Tarkowska (Polish Academy of Sciences), Kazimiera Wódcz (University of Silesia) and Wielisława Warzywoda-Kruszyńska (University of Łódź) have jointly conducted research on various aspects of poverty in Poland. Part of the interest is devoted to the inhabitants of the former collective state farms. After conducting a wave of interviews with several members of each selected family in 2003, Elżbieta Tarkowska came back to her respondents in 2007. In effect two edited volumes were published in 2004 and 2008. Additionally, one of the books of the team was composed mostly of the selected interviews preceded with a short commentary (Tarkowska, Warzywoda-Kruszyńska, Wódcz, *Poor People about Themselves and Their Lives*, Katowice-Warszawa 2003).

Examples of quantitative longitudinal research conducted in Poland

1) Research on primary and secondary school pupils⁹

Longitudinal research was conducted between mid-1970's and mid-1990's on whole cohorts of school children in the Toruń and Włocławek regions by the team of sociologists from University of Nicolaus Copernicus in Toruń headed by Professors Zbigniew Kwieciński and Ryszard Borowicz. Until the mid-1990's the dominant technique was audience questionnaire. After the introduction in Poland of the Personal Data Protection Act in 1997, the research team decided to change the character of the project and base it on representative samples.

2) Social structure in Poland. Dynamic analysis in the international context¹⁰

A research team of sociologists from the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences (Kazimierz Słomczyński

- head, Henryk Domański, Bogdan Mach, Krystyna Janicka et al.) between 1988 and 2008, conducted 5 waves of their panel research project. This group of scientists has managed to continue their work on the project in spite of difficulties related to the new law regulations (Personal Data Protection Act from 1997). They publish regularly the outcomes of their research in the form of books and articles (both in Polish and English).

Development planning:

Although thanks to various initiatives a significant amount of qualitative data have been collected over recent years, there are serious gaps within the existing framework:

a) Data sharing or archiving for re-use is not a part of the research culture within the field of social sciences in Poland;

b) Social scientists are not only reluctant to share the data collected by themselves, but also to use the available data collected by other researchers. As an effect only a very little involvement of the academic researchers in the initiatives devoted to collecting qualitative data can be observed;

c) There is no balance between collecting data and analysing it. What is more, some of the institutions mentioned in this report focus entirely on collecting data. The task they fulfil is very important; however it would be very good if the qualitative material gathered with so much investment of time, effort and financial sources aroused interest of the analysts as well.

d) There is still very little communication between institutions collecting qualitative data on various levels. This lack of exchange of sometimes basic information causes situations when several projects overlap with each other or even repeat the same type of interviews with the same people over a short period of time.

e) Institutions collecting qualitative data constantly suffer shortages of financial sources to the extent that very often they do not have enough money for the creation of professional catalogues and computer databases, and furthermore, not enough for good quality recordings that could be used later as audio/video materials (and not only the basis for transcriptions).

f) The Personal Data Protection Act from 1997 constitutes a separate question. Despite the fears of many researchers, its introduction was not the end of social research in Poland. Institutions and research teams have to follow certain regulations, however conducting research (including research of a longitudinal character) and collecting data is still very much possible. Therefore it is not entirely clear why the group of sociologists from Torun claims that they were "forced" to reshape their longitudinal project whereas the team of Professor Słomczyński from the Polish Academy of Sciences continues its work (discussed above).

In terms of priorities for development over the next three years, the main priority is probably a gradual change in the dominant research patterns and practices within the area of social sciences. This naturally will be a long-term process, nevertheless certain actions could be taken. A strategy of building closer relations with academia based on already existing infrastructure (although its condition is not satisfactory) seems to be a natural direction.

Financial support is always very much appreciated, however existing organizations (IASSIST, CESSDA) could provide something equally important, namely intellectual support. Polish institutions dealing with

archiving of the qualitative data are still very little advanced, therefore assistance and advice of more experienced partners might help avoid many mistakes and thereby have a significant influence on future development.

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Appendix I

National policies on data archiving and sharing

1) Personal Data Protection Act from 1997 [Ustawa z dnia 29 sierpnia o ochronie danych osobowych]. Full text in Polish available on the website of the Polish Parliament: <http://isip.sejm.gov.pl/servlet/Search?todo=open&id=WDU19971330883>

The most important legal act concerning protection of personal data in Poland is the Act of 29 August 1997 on the Protection of Personal Data. The act establishes the Inspector General and determines framework of the personal data processing. The Inspector General is competent in the issues concerning personal data protection and may inspect any subject who processes personal data. Entities which belong to the EEA (European Economic Area) are obliged to comply with the Act on the Protection of Personal Data only if they operate in the territory of Poland. This means that almost every company registered in Polish National Court Register have to comply with the Act. The main requirements for the data controller are:

- To process personal data on the basis of legal prerequisites
- To inform data subjects about their rights and the data controller status
- To register the data files in the Inspector General Office
- To secure the personal data from uncontrolled access
- To remove the personal data in case of a request from the data subject

Personal data usually cannot be transferred outside of EEA (European Economic Area) without prior approval of the data subject. However, it can be transferred without restrictions in the European Union and few other countries (e.g. Norway, Island, Lichtenstein).

Not applying the provisions of the Polish Act on Personal Data Protection can lead to criminal responsibility, in some cases even to three years of imprisonment. More often it leads to administrative proceeding.

Source: Law Firm Czuchaj and Partners www.czuchaj.pl

2) The Civil Code (within the scope of research among children). Full and unified text in Polish available in on the website of the Polish Parliament:
<http://isip.sejm.gov.pl/servlet/Search?todo=open&id=WDU19640160093>

3) ICC/ESOMAR International Code on Market and Social Research
http://www.esomar.org/uploads/pdf/professional-standards/ICCESOMAR_Code_English_.pdf

4) Qualitative Research Consultants Association (Code of Ethics and Guide to Professional Qualitative Research Practices)
<http://www.qrca.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=21>

5) Control Program of the Quality of Work of Pollsters (Polish Association of Public Opinion and Marketing Research Firms)
<http://www.ofbor.pl/index.php?i=pkjpa&id=1&pg=1>

Appendix II

Other selected oral history initiatives that protect collected sources/data

Museum for the History of Polish Jews
 (dozens of interviews with Poles who rescued Jews during WWII – project “Righteous Among the Nations”)
 Contact details: ul. Warecka 4/6, 00-040 Warszawa, web: www.jewish-museum.org.pl
 Tel: +48 22 833 00 21, email: [Lucja Koch - lkoch@jewishmuseum.org.pl](mailto:LucjaKoch-lkoch@jewishmuseum.org.pl)

Center for Citizenship Education
 (45 interviews with Poles who rescued Jews during WWII)
 Contact details: ul. Noakowskiego 10, 00-666 Warszawa, web: www.ceo.org.pl
 Tel: +48 22 6220089, Marianna Hajdukiewicz (coordinator) - marianna@ceo.org.pl

Christian Association of Auschwitz Families – project Memento
 (45 interviews with Auschwitz survivors, 200 hours, 1000 pages of transcriptions).
 Contact details: ul. Partyzantów 1, 32-600 Oświęcim, web: www.auschwitzmemento.pl
 Tel: +48 508-099-030, +48 503 078 357, biuro@auschwitzmemento.pl

Lower Silesian Forum of Cultural Background „Milenium”
 (130 interviews with people relocated to Lower Silesia after 1945)
 Contact details: ul. Kowalska 58/28, 51-424 Wrocław, tel: +48 888 315 334,
 Juliusz Woźny - juliuszw@wp.pl

Museum of Warsaw Praga District
 (several interviews with the oldest inhabitants of the district)
 Contact details: ul. Targowa 45, 03-728 Warszawa, tel: +48 818 10 77, +48 695 645 501, muzem.pragi@mh.wpl

European Solidarity Center
 („Solidarity movement in my memory” - 20 interviews)
 Contact details: Wały Jagiellońskie 1, 80-853 Gdańsk, tel: +48 58 3237056,
 Monika Bogdanowicz - m.bogdanowicz@gdansk.gda.pl

Pedagogical Academy in Cracow, Institute of History

(150 interviews with people expelled from Polish Eastern Borders (Kresy) after 1945)
 Contact details: ul. Podchorążych 2, 30-084 Kraków, tel: +48 604 135 930,
 Hubert Chudzio, PhD - hubert@ap.krakow.pl

Center „Remembrance and Future” in Wrocław
 (interviews with Poles relocated to Polish Western Borderlands after 1945)
 Contact details: al. gen. J. Hallera 8, 53 – 318 Wrocław, tel: +48 71 33490 44, +48 663 901 767, biuro@pamieciprzyszlosc.pl

Fundacja Kobieta eFka
 (Feminist organization conducting interviews with women in different gender-focused projects)
 Contact details: ul. Krakowska 19, 31-062 Kraków, tel: +48 12 430 19 70, efka@efka.org.pl

And – last but not least – there are memorial sites, especially of former concentration camps, which collect, archive and make accessible oral history interviews with survivors. Most of these interviews are thematic ones – they focus on the camp experience. Most of these, however, treat texts of transcripts as the primary source and neglect the recordings.

Auschwitz Memorial
 (3000 written accounts of former inmates, plus over a 100 audio and video interviews)
 Contact details: ul. Więźniów Oświęcimia 20, 32 – 603 Oświęcim, tel: +48 33 8431934

Majdanek Memorial
 (interviews with former prisoners)
 Contact details: Droga Męczenników Majdanek 67, 20-325 Lublin, tel: +48 81 744 26 47, sekretariat@majdanek.pl

Stutthof
 (550 accounts of former prisoners – text, audio and video)
 Contact details: ul. Muzealna 6, 82-110 Sztutowo, tel: +48552478353, stutthof@stutthof.pl

Gross-Rosen Museum
 (206 video and 97 audio interviews with former prisoners)
 Contact details: ul. Szarych Szeregów 9, 58-304 Wałbrzych, muzem@gross-rosen.pl

Treblinka Museum (47 interviews)
 Contact details: 08-330 Kosów Lacki, tel: +48-25-781-16-58, biuro@muzem-treblinka.pl

Bełżec Museum (80 interviews – all with transcriptions)
 Contact details: Ofiar Obozu 4, 22-670 Bełżec, tel: +48 846652510, muzem@belzec.org.pl

Notes

1. Contact details of country reporters:

- Piotr Binder
pbinder@ifispan.waw.pl, tel: +48 505289998
 Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences
 Nowy Świat 72, 00-330 Warsaw, Poland

- Piotr Filipkowski

p.filipkowski@karta.org.pl, tel: +48 694699470

Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences

Nowy Świat 72, 00-330 Warsaw, Poland

and

KARTA Center, Narbutta Str. 29, 02-536 Warsaw, Poland

2. Contact details:

Qualitative Data Archive [Archiwum Danych Jakościowych]

<http://www.ifispan.waw.pl/>

[archiwum_danych_jakosciowych/o_archiwum/](http://www.ifispan.waw.pl/archiwum_danych_jakosciowych/o_archiwum/)

Nowy Świat 72, 00-330 Warsaw, tel: +48 22 657 2852

Professor Hanna Palska - hpalska@poczta.onet.pl

Artur Kościański, PhD - akoscian@ifispan.waw.pl

3. Contact details:

KARTA, ul. Narbutta 29; 02-536 Warszawa, tel. +48 22 848 07 12, web:

www.karta.org.pl; email: p.filipkowski@karta.org.pl

History Meeting House, ul. Karowa 20, 00-324 Warszawa, tel: +48 22

826 25 78, www.dsh.waw.pl ; www.audiohistoria.pl ; email: ahm@dsh.waw.pl

4. Contact details: ul. Grzybowska 79, 00-844 Warszawa; tel: +48 22 539

79 38; www.1944.pl; email: kontakt@1944.pl

5. Contact details: ul. Grodzka 21; 20-112 Lublin; tel. +48 81 532 58 67;

www.tnn.pl; email: teatrnn@tnn.lublin.pl

6. Contact details:

Michał Łuczewski PhD, Warsaw University, Institute of Sociology, 18

Karowa St., 00-927 Warsaw, luczewskim@is.uw.edu.pl

7. Contact details:

Qualitative Data Archive [Archiwum Danych Jakościowych]

<http://www.ifispan.waw.pl/>

[archiwum_danych_jakosciowych/o_archiwum/](http://www.ifispan.waw.pl/archiwum_danych_jakosciowych/o_archiwum/)

Nowy Świat 72, 00-330 Warsaw, tel: +48 657 2852

Professor Hanna Palska - hpalska@poczta.onet.pl

Artur Kościański, PhD - akoscian@ifispan.waw.pl

8. Contact details:

Professor Elżbieta Tarkowska, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology,

Polish Academy of Sciences, Department of Theory of Culture,

Research Group of Poverty Studies

Nowy Świat 72, 00-330 Warsaw, etarkows@ifispan.waw.pl

9. Contact details:

Monika Kwiecińska-Zdrenka, PhD, University of Nikolas Copernicus,

Institute of Sociology,

Fosa Staromiejska 1a, 87-100 Toruń, monika.kwiecinska@umk.pl

10. Contact details:

Professor Kazimierz M. Słomczyński, Institute of Philosophy and

Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences, Research Group of

Comparative Analysis of Social Inequalities, Nowy Świat 72, 00-330

Warsaw, kms0543@aol.com

Qualitative Data Archiving in Switzerland

by Brian Kleiner, Claudia Heinzmann, Thomas S. Eberle, Manfred Max Bergman¹



Abstract

At the time of the Bremen workshop in 2009, there was no Swiss institution responsible for archiving qualitative social science data collected in Switzerland. Since that time, the Swiss institution FORS (Swiss Centre of Expertise in the Social Sciences) has assumed this role, with development of the infrastructure, policy, and know-how needed for implementation. The archiving of qualitative data at FORS is now moving forward in close collaboration with Swiss universities with established and strong qualitative research traditions. Over time, the success of qualitative data archiving at FORS will require the support of research funding institutions and policymakers, enhanced educational initiatives at universities, promotion of the value and potential of secondary data analysis, and a well-equipped and staffed archive that serves also as a network node and resource centre.

Keywords: Secondary use; archives; data; qualitative research; research infrastructure; Switzerland

Introduction

During the last two decades, qualitative inquiries have gained increasing popularity among European researchers in the social sciences and related fields. However, despite the institutionalization and legitimization of qualitative inquiries, this form of research "has not yet reached the same significance and reputation in Switzerland as it has in many other countries" (Eberle & Bergman 2005: 1). Qualitative research in Switzerland is "lagging behind with regard to networks and structures that could offer information, support, resources, quality control and advanced training" (Eberle 2005: 4). Whilst there exists federal, cantonal, and private archives in Switzerland that provide access to a variety of historical data, at the time of the Bremen workshop in 2009 there was still no Swiss archive for data collected within the framework of qualitative research projects in the social and related sciences. Neither was there a resource centre or formalized network for offering services, information, and advice for researchers working within the qualitative research tradition. Since

that time, FORS (Swiss Centre of Expertise in the Social Sciences) has assumed the role of central archive for qualitative data produced in Switzerland, and in coordination with various institutions and researchers has begun to make available resources for qualitative work.

In this article we describe some of the potential for and obstacles to qualitative data archiving in Switzerland. Since archiving and re-use of qualitative data has to be discussed within a wider framework of quality concerns of qualitative inquiries (Bergman & Coxon 2005; Eberle 2005), we first describe recent steps in promoting qualitative research in Switzerland. We then examine current challenges to maintaining a qualitative data archive, and close by discussing future prospects in Switzerland.

The current situation in Switzerland: steps toward promoting qualitative research and data archiving

As a result of the contrast between the increasing numbers of qualitative studies on the one hand and the lack of institutionalization of qualitative research on the other, the Swiss Academy for Humanities and Social Sciences (SAGW/ASSH) has launched several initiatives to promote qualitative research in Switzerland². The primary goals of these initiatives are to build and strengthen networks, work toward best practices in methods and teaching, and to assess the feasibility of an archive and resource centre for qualitative research.

In cooperation with the former Swiss Information and Data Archive Service for the Social Sciences (SIDOS, now part of FORS, see below) and the Social Science Policy Council (a committee of the SAGW), a workshop was conducted in 2002 to identify the experiences of active qualitative researchers in Switzerland as well as key representatives of qualitative archives and similar institutions from other European countries³. This event led to subsequent meetings and to three working groups, which were asked by the SAGW to produce an informative and accessible document on (a) the possibilities and limits of qualitative research for the social and related sciences, (b)

quality criteria for assessing research results from qualitative research, and (c) recommendations on how to integrate qualitative research methods into the university curriculum. A document summarising the issues elaborated by the working groups was discussed at a final meeting with international experts, found strong support from the qualitative research community in Switzerland, and a fully elaborated "statement" was published in 2009 (Bergman et al).

Since the 2009 Bremen workshop, FORS has taken concrete steps to establish the capacity for archiving qualitative data, including a workshop of archiving and research experts in 2010, development of specific policies and procedures, as well as workflow and system adjustments to integrate qualitative data into its database. With the capacity now in place, FORS is poised to introduce qualitative research data into its holdings.

Obstacles to qualitative data archiving in Switzerland

While FORS has begun archiving data from qualitative research projects, it is not clear yet that the research community in Switzerland will take notice, deposit their data, and make use of the qualitative data of others. Specifically, there remain a variety of significant potential barriers:

1. The use of secondary data is considered to be more easily applicable for quantitative research than for qualitative studies. In general, qualitative researchers in Switzerland are not familiar with the possibilities of secondary data analysis, and they do not know which research topics or potentially available data sets are suitable for secondary data analysis. More specifically, the idea of developing research questions based on the data of "someone else" seems challenging. This difficulty is related to the belief that it is necessary for qualitative researchers to go through the whole process of data collection in order to contextualize the material in an appropriate way (e.g., Corti 2000: 26 for more details; for a critique, see Moore 2007).
2. The various types of qualitative data make it difficult to decide which material should be archived and provided for re-use. Among researchers, specific concerns arise in relation to supplementary materials, such as researchers' field notes and personal notes made before and after interviews. These materials are quite important in providing an interpretive context, but they are often considered to be too private or sensitive to be shared with other researchers.
3. One of the key concerns is related to the ethical and legal implications of rendering qualitative data accessible. That is, there is the problem of ensuring anonymity, confidentiality, and data protection. Can qualitative data be adequately and consistently anonymised without reducing the value of and interest in the data for re-use? If not, are there other ways to address adequately the need to protect confidentiality, such as informed consent or strict access conditions? Beyond questions of anonymization and data integrity, it is not entirely clear how Swiss law treats the subject of data protection. Although there are federal and cantonal laws on archiving and data protection (e.g. Confédération Suisse 2008; Grand Conseil du Canton du Vaud 2007), there are no national policies specifically relating to qualitative data. These legal issues should be addressed by specialists knowledgeable about Swiss law.
4. The various types of qualitative data (e.g. transcripts, field notes, audio and videotapes, pictures, etc.) present difficulties with respect to adequately preserving the data over a long period of time (see Corti 2000: 20f for a detailed discussion). FORS should have sufficient resources for ensuring the requisite infrastructure, staff, and know-how for dealing with different and changing formats over time.

5. Finally, there are financial challenges in developing and maintaining an archive for qualitative data indefinitely.

In addition to these potential challenges, there is the problem of whether or not there will be significant interest in archived qualitative data. In Switzerland, data re-use is not a deeply engrained part of the research culture. Furthermore, secondary analysis is far more common with quantitative data. With respect to re-use and sharing of qualitative data, this happens only occasionally for individual projects. It is quite likely that the lack of work in this area is due to insufficient know-how and training on the part of most researchers, lack of available national data for re-use, a comparatively generous funding infrastructure for the collection of new data, and a general lack of awareness and appreciation about the value and potential of the re-use of high-quality data. It is clear that much work needs to be done to develop, advance, and promote re-use of qualitative data in Switzerland, which should include training, networking, and support in research grant applications.

Development planning

Currently, FORS is strongly interested in continuing in the direction of qualitative data archiving, dissemination, and the provision of additional resources to researchers. It has developed a set of institutional policies and procedures regarding qualitative data, as well as a guide to assist researchers in how to prepare their data for deposit. The social science research holdings within the archive at FORS are currently mostly quantitative, but now include data from several qualitative research projects. In concert with researchers within Switzerland (including several authors of this paper), future efforts will be devoted to promoting and encouraging secondary analyses of qualitative data and deposit of project data at FORS.

There are some gaps that should be noted. Realising qualitative archiving at FORS in the long-run will certainly require additional resources, including at least one new staff member and additional technical infrastructure and development. In any case, the continued development of qualitative data archiving in Switzerland should be done in close collaboration with experienced researchers and with universities where qualitative research is firmly established.

Conclusion

Even in quantitative research, secondary data analysis is not well established among some research branches in the social and related sciences in Switzerland. Nevertheless, most stakeholders in the social science research domain in Switzerland would agree on the various scientific and cost-benefit advantages of secondary data analysis of high-quality data from qualitative research projects. Realising a sophisticated data archive for qualitative research in Switzerland will have to include (a) the support of research funding institutions and research policy makers, (b) more systematic training in qualitative research at universities and the connected possibility of secondary data analysis, (c) a well-equipped and staffed archive that actively conducts outreach projects and serves as a network node and resource centre, and (d) the uptake of the use of an archive by the research community, encouraged and supported by funding bodies, an active research network, and their own methodological expertise.

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Notes

1. Brian Kleiner FORS, Swiss Centre of Expertise in the Social Sciences, Lausanne, Switzerland
 Claudia Heinzmann Institute of Sociology, University of Basel, Switzerland
 Thomas S. Eberle Institute of Sociology, University of St. Gall, Switzerland
 Manfred Max Bergman Institute of Sociology, University of Basel, Switzerland
 Contact: Brian Kleiner, Brian.Kleiner@fors.unil.ch

2. For detailed discussions and reasons on why to promote qualitative research, see Eberle (2005).

3. Updated versions of the conference presentations are published in Bergman & Eberle (2005).

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